

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND
ZEN BUDDHISM FROM A ROMAN CATHOLIC
POKNT OF VIEW

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Submitted to the Temple University Graduate Board
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 1976

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE BOARD

Title of Dissertation:

The Encounter Between Roman Catholicism and
Zen Buddhism from a Roman Catholic
Point of View

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Accepted by the Graduate Board of Temple University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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May 21, 1974

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PREFACE

During the past fifty years, a significant encounter has taken place between representatives of Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. A number of Catholics in Asia, Europe, and the United States have attempted to bridge the gap between the traditions of Buddha and of Jesus. These attempts have touched upon substantive issues in the lives of the Catholics involved, Catholics who have been committed Christians and who have reached out to Zen and found that Zen spoke to them. They felt that they heard the voice of the Orient as articulated in Zen and have integrated that voice into their lives while retaining their integrity as followers of Jesus.

The major purpose of this dissertation is to record and to critically analyze the encounter between Roman Catholics and Zen Buddhists during the twentieth century. Since the sixteenth century there have been sporadic encounters between Catholics and Zen Buddhists. The first encounters between members of these two ancient traditions were quite cordial and substantive. The history of these initial encounters will be outlined in the Introduction as background for the contemporary encounter. The body of the

dissertation will describe the contemporary meeting in which some Catholics attempted and are still attempting to integrate the tradition, the spirit, and the practice of Zen into their own lives as Catholics.

There is no intention in this dissertation to compare Roman Catholic teaching and life with Zen. Rather the purpose is to present an analytic description of the encounter between these two traditions during the twentieth century, to present some critical conclusions which will evaluate the encounter to date, and to raise some questions which could point to a possible direction and development of the encounter. These conclusions and questions arise not only from the examination of the encounter that has already occurred but also from a consideration of the writings of two Zen Buddhists (D. T. Suzuki and S. Hisamatsu), one Roman Catholic theologian, and the general Thomistic philosophical, theological articulation of Roman Catholicism. The dissertation is a response to the questions: What has happened in the encounter between Catholics and Zen Buddhists from a Catholic point of view? What are the key points of discussion? Do these key points give expression to the fundamental thrust of Catholic Thomistic theology, and the core of Zen as expressed by Hisamatsu and Suzuki? What directions might the encounter take? The conclusions that are expressed are tentative. They give expression to the author's sugges-

tions as to how the issues might be considered in the encounter, and how the encounter might be transformed into a meeting. Insofar as they are made in the context of an encounter, it is assumed that they can be developed further, rejected, or accepted. An encounter is a dynamic rather than a static reality.

This dissertation includes material from the Roman Catholic and the Zen Buddhist traditions. It is not implied here that there is one specific point of view which may be called Catholic or one tradition in Zen Buddhism. The designation, Roman Catholic, refers to the religious tradition exemplified by the writings of the particular Catholics who are included in the dissertation, in particular the Thomistic tradition. The point of view of the dissertation itself is Catholic. This means that the resources are the writings of Catholics who have met Zen Buddhists rather than vice-versa.

The format of the dissertation evolved from a reading of the writings of the Catholics involved in the contemporary meeting with Zen. These authors treated similar themes in their discussion of their encounter with Zen. Each chapter of the dissertation presents at least one of these themes. It is precisely this breakdown into themes which is the analytic aspect of the dissertation.

Each chapter is divided into four parts. The first part is a presentation of the ideas of the Catholic

authors who have participated in the contemporary encounter with Zen. It is a response to the question: What has happened in the encounter between Zen and Catholicism? In this part the similarities and differences of the authors in regard to the theme(s) of the chapter are described. The second part of each chapter is a presentation of the theme(s) of that chapter as discussed by Suzuki and Hisamatsu. In the third section of the chapter the thought of Rahner on the theme of the chapter is discussed. The intent of the second and third parts of each chapter is to present the thought of these Zen and Catholic authors as touchstones in each of their respective traditions and as points of view from which a critical analysis of the encounter between Zen and Catholicism will be made. The fourth part of each chapter is a response to the critical questions: Do the authors who have encountered Zen give expression to the fundamental realities as expressed in Thomistic theology and do they confront the central issues of Zen as expressed by Hisamatsu and Suzuki?

The authors who are discussed in this dissertation were chosen for various reasons. The Roman Catholics presented in the first part of each chapter were selected because they have written about their encounter with Zen. Rahner has not dealt with Zen in his writings. He was selected because he is a Catholic theologian who is deeply sensitive to and explicitly works out of the Catholic tra-

dition developing the theology of Thomas Aquinas as it encounters contemporary philosophical-theological issues. Rahner is also the most comprehensive of contemporary Catholic theologians, and provides a Catholic touchstone. D. T. Suzuki was chosen because he is the most articulate of the Zen Buddhists who have attempted to communicate Zen to the West. The choice of S. Hisamatsu is based on the assumption that his metaphysical articulation of Zen might provide a felicitous counterpart of Rahner's metaphysically grounded articulation of Catholicism. The Zen presented in the second part of each chapter is the Zen articulated by Suzuki and Hisamatsu as understood and interpreted by the author of this dissertation.

In summary, the major thrust and creative aspect of this dissertation is fourfold:

1. The dissertation describes analytically the contemporary encounter between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism through an analysis of the writings of Catholics personally involved in this encounter.
2. The dissertation brings Rahner, Suzuki, and Hisamatsu into the encounter.
3. A third creative aspect is to point to the theme of the one and the many as a focal theme for the Catholics involved in the encounter with Zen.
4. The fourth creative aspect of the dissertation is critical. It will be concluded that the encounter

between Roman Catholics and Zen has not yet become a meeting. By this is meant that the Catholics who do give expression to the fundamental ground of Roman Catholicism as the experience of God as Being do not face the central issue of Zen, which, according to both Suzuki and Hisamatsu, is Oriental Nothingness, which is not bound by the duality of Being and Nonbeing. However, this does not mean, from the Catholic point of view, that no meeting is possible. It will be shown that, not only is there a significant line of thought in Catholicism, which resonates with Oriental Nothingness, but also that Catholics are not bound into the categorical identification of God with Being.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the encounter between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism can be divided into two periods. The first meeting of these traditions took place from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth century. The second period began in the middle of the nineteenth century and continues to the present. In this introduction the broad lines of the earlier meeting will be drawn and then the men involved in the contemporary encounter between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism will be introduced.

There are three major aspects of the early meeting: the encounter between Francis Xavier and some Zen Buddhist monks; the recommendations of Valignano, a Jesuit mission visitor; and the integration of the tea ceremony with Christianity by Japanese Christians.

Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary, arrived in Japan in August 1549. Within a few months he established a friendship with the abbot of a Zen monastery. In a letter dated November 5, 1549, he wrote:

I have spoken often with several learned bonzes, especially with one who is held in high esteem here by everyone, as much for his knowledge,

conduct, and dignity, as for his great age of eighty years. His name is Ninshitsu, which in Japanese signifies "Heart of Truth". He is among them as a bishop, and if his name is appropriate, he is indeed a blessed man. In the many conversations I had with him, I found him doubtful and uncertain as to whether our soul is immortal or dies with the body. Frequently he would say "Yes", but again, he would say "No". I fear that other learned monks are like him. But it is a marvel how good a friend this man is to me.¹

Francis Xavier was a Catholic missionary committed to the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The general attitude of Catholic Christianity during the life of Xavier, which coincided with the Reformation, was not one of tolerance toward non-Christians (witness the plight of the Jews of Spain during the earlier Inquisition). Yet Francis, in the very midst of fundamental disagreements with Ninshitsu, both recognized and admired the holiness of this venerable Zen monk and counted him as a friend. A few years later (1579-82), the Jesuit mission visitor, Valignano, recommended that this friendly approach become a policy among the missionaries in Japan. He suggested that the missionaries should "cultivate friendship" with the Buddhist monks, some of whom were certainly Zen monks.²

During his stay in Japan, Xavier came to have a great admiration for the sharpness of mind of the Japanese

¹Henrich Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism, trans. Paul Peachey (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 199-200.

²Ibid., p. 203.

whom he met. Therefore, he especially appealed to their power of reason. Spurred on by the cause of the gospel, Francis received many visitors with whom he disputed religious questions. Some of the major issues they discussed were: the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the difference between man and animal, the presence of evil in the world, the existence of the devil, the mercy of God and redemption, and, finally, a principle at the beginning of all things.³ Valignano undertook the task of writing a Catholic response to these and many other issues. He was aware of the success of the catechism in Europe and hence prepared a catechism which would respond to Buddhist teachings. This was a difficult task by reason of the great variety of Buddhist schools. Zen was considered to be the most important school of Japanese Buddhism. Therefore, while Zen is not named, the fundamental attitude of Zen is clearly present in Valignano's catechism.⁴

In both the disputations and the catechism, Roman Catholics approached Zen as an esoteric tradition and as teaching a doctrine of negation. Zen was even seen by some to be contrary to the very law of God.

Although Francis Xavier had doctrinal disagreements with Zen, he admired the Japanese culture. He wrote

³Ibid., pp. 204-06.

⁴Ibid., p. 207.

to friends that Japan surpassed his native Spain in culture. Valignano, though he also differed in doctrinal matters, officially promoted cultural adaptation. He, in fact, proposed as much cultural adaptation as he thought doctrine would allow. Zen was the chosen model.

The early meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism involved not only Catholic missionaries and Zen monks but also Japanese converts to Christianity who attempted to integrate their native tradition with their new found faith. An important example of this integration is the Japanese tea ceremony. It was in the last quarter of the sixteenth century that the "way of tea" reached the height of its development in Japan.⁵ This "way of tea" is fundamentally related to Zen. The flowering of the tea ceremony also coincided with the arrival of the Jesuit missionaries in Japan. The hermitage of Sen no Rikyu, the tea master of the Japanese ruler Hideyashi, was an established meeting place for warriors for the practice of the "way of tea." Among the seven best disciples of Sen no Rikyu, the "seven wise men of tea," five were Christian.⁶ These men met as friends. In the "way of tea" they sought tranquility from the ravages of war. Japanese Catholics participated in the "art of tea" in a Zen spirit. Henri Dumoulin, a contemporary Catholic student of Zen, suggests that "the Christian participant in the ceremony can replace

⁵Ibid., p. 213.

⁶Ibid., p. 218.

the Buddhist background of this art by his own faith, without falsification." He then asks: "Might this also be possible with the actual Zen exercise?" insofar as "instruction in the tea ceremony was conducted in a manner similar to that used in the transmission of Zen."⁷ It would seem that the sixteenth century Christian Daimyo (lords) lived the answer to this question in their integration of the two traditions.

Unfortunately, this atmosphere of friendly disputes was dissipated. Gradually, enmity arose from both sides until it finally broke out in physical violence, with the reciprocal burning of churches and temples.⁸ Western Christians were expelled from Japan. We hear no more of the meeting between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism until Japan was reopened in the nineteenth century.

The contemporary meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism began with the return of Catholic missionaries to Japan around the middle of the nineteenth century. These missionaries worked with the same zeal as their predecessors. Schooled in the doctrines of the Councils of Trent and then Vatican I, the approach of many but not all of the missionaries to the native non-Christian religions was little more than one of friendly tolerance. Some Christians in Japan, however, transcended this attitude.

⁷Ibid., pp. 215-16.

⁸Ibid., p. 204.

Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle, a German Jesuit missionary in Japan who is described as "a Catholic Father in Zen style,"⁹ exemplifies this new attitude. As a missionary working among the Japanese people Enomiya-Lassalle desired to gain as many insights into the Japanese character as he could. In order to do this he began to study Zen. But studying was not enough for him. He began to practice Zen meditation (zazen). He came to the conclusion that zazen is not only a means to understand the Japanese character but also a great help for his own spiritual life. Enomiya-Lassalle came to a deep experiential knowledge of Zen meditation. He has said of himself:

For many years I have been engaged in a study of Japanese Zen. In the beginning my objective was not so much to enrich my own spiritual life as to gain insights into the Japanese character through Zen, and I considered this an adaptation necessary for a missionary. The more I studied Zen, the more clearly I realized its deep influence on Japanese thought. Not content with mere theory, I also practiced Zen, taking part in Zen meditation. It was then that I came to realize that Zen was a great help to my own spiritual life. My conviction grew that, practiced in the right way, Zen could be useful to anyone regardless of his religious convictions and denomination.¹⁰

Then Enomiya-Lassalle began to study under the Zen

⁹Dom Aelred Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), p. 10.

¹⁰Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen-Way to Enlightenment (New York: Taplinger, 1968), p. 9.

Master, Yasutani Roshi who is a disciple of Harada Roshi. The latter "had sought to combine the more 'orthodox' and conscientiously ethical Soto school with the often violent and irrational methods of Rinzaï."¹¹

Some Japanese believe that Enomiya-Lassalle has received enlightenment. He himself has "confessed that he had not attained enlightenment (kensho)."¹² Nevertheless, Enomiya-Lassalle has conscientiously and critically adapted the Zen zazen to his own prayer life. He has further attempted to communicate (through his teaching and writing) the values of Zen meditation for Christian prayer.

At the same time that Enomiya-Lassalle was following the practice of Zen, his friend and co-missionary, Henri Dumoulin, S.J., began to translate some of the ancient Zen texts into German.¹³ His approach to Zen is more scholarly

¹¹R. C. Zaehner, Concordant Discord: The Interdependence of Faiths (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 287. I do not wish to enter into a discussion with Zaehner concerning his descriptions of the Soto and Rinzaï schools of Zen. I do wish to point out that his description of the Soto school as "more orthodox" and the Rinzaï school as "violent and irrational" is, at least, an oversimplification. The differences between these two schools of Zen needs much more explanation than is presented here.

¹²Henrich Dumoulin, "A Dialogue with Zen Buddhists," Opportunities for Belief and Behavior, Concilium 29, ed. Christian Duquoc (New York: Paulist Press, 1967): 160.

¹³William Johnston, "Dialogue With Zen, Secularization and Spirituality," Concilium 49, ed. Christian Duquoc (New York: Paulist Press, 1969): 145.

than Enomiya-Lassalle's approach. Dumoulin is especially responsible for giving us a history of Zen Buddhism.

During the past few years another Jesuit missionary in Japan has become prominent in the dialogue between Zen and Roman Catholicism. William Johnston, an Irish Jesuit, has been ~~in~~ Japan for over twenty years and studied Japanese at Sophia University in Tokyo. He has attempted to combine the study and the practice of Zen. His writings attempt to relate Zen to the spiritual tradition of Western mysticism, especially to St. John of the Cross and to the author of the English mystical classic, The Cloud of Unknowing. Combining humor with scholarship and insight, Johnston has dedicated his life to the meeting between Zen and Roman Catholicism. He has found that Zen is not only enriching but also "has broadened my Christian faith more than I can say."¹⁴ Johnston's interest in Zen arose initially from his fascination with the contemplative ideal in Buddhism. He began to "sit in meditation" and to develop friendly relationships with some Zen monks. He found that, as was the case with Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen meditation was a great aid for his prayer as a Christian. Today he is attempting to play a part in the renewal of prayer in Christianity. For this task, he finds in Zen a classic and penetrating teacher.¹⁵

¹⁴William Johnston, Christian Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 1.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 2-9.

The meeting between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism has also been manifest in a number of formal meetings in Japan between Zen Buddhists and Christians. The first of these took place in the spring of 1967 at Oiso, Japan. The participants in the meeting included representatives of the Rinzai and Soto schools of Zen and Protestant and Catholic Christians. This was the first meeting of its kind between Christians and Zen Buddhists. It was arranged by the Society of Friends and directed by the eminent Quaker, Dr. Douglas V. Steere.¹⁶ A number of talks were presented to the gathering. Dumoulin, in his report of this meeting, pointed out that it "was the first full-scale inter-religious dialogue to take place in Japan."¹⁷ Three reports were given by Catholics, the first by Dumoulin, the second by a Japanese Carmelite friar, Ichiro Okumura, and the third by Enomiya-Lassalle.¹⁸ A second meeting of Zen Buddhists and Christians took place in Kyoto during the summer of 1968.¹⁹ These meetings manifested a growing grass-roots interest in Zen by Roman Catholics. Johnston points out that a "growing number of Catholic Japanese nuns, for example, are quietly practicing Zen."²⁰

The contemporary meeting between Zen Buddhism and

¹⁶Dumoulin, "A Dialogue with Zen Buddhists," p. 156.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 170.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 158-59.

¹⁹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 11.

²⁰Ibid., p. 19.

Roman Catholicism is not confined to Japan. Enomiya-Lasalle, who writes in German, has also traveled in Germany attempting to communicate the insights he has received from Zen. Johnston regularly visits the United States where he conducts workshops, retreats, and courses on Zen Buddhism and Western mysticism. Also, a variety of people living in the United States became interested in and began to write about their thoughts and experience of Zen from a Roman Catholic point of view.

The most prominent of these is the recently deceased Trappist monk, Thomas Merton. Merton died on December 10, 1968 in Bangkok, where he had gone to attend a meeting with some Buddhists. Merton's visit to the Orient was his first lengthy absence from his Abbey in Gethsemani, Kentucky, in twenty-six years. However, it was not his first encounter with the monastic and mystical traditions of the Orient. During the last ten years of his life, more or less, Merton had written many articles and meditated for long hours on the spiritual writings of the East, especially the writings of Zen Buddhists. During this time he was in contact with D. T. Suzuki through correspondence and also met Suzuki face-to-face at least once.

One may find in the "Zen writings" of Merton a more than sympathetic portrayal of the spirit of Zen. Sympathy, however, had not always been Merton's attitude toward the Eastern religious traditions. His life shows

a significant change of attitude toward the Orient. This change was not abrupt and discontinuous but gradual. A brief sketch of Merton's metamorphosis follows.

In November of 1937, Merton was introduced to Aldous Huxley's book, Ends and Means. During his adolescence Merton had read the novels of Huxley with much relish. Hence, open to Huxley, he was able not only to hear of the practice of prayer and asceticism as relevant to the problems of war and violence, but also to accept this practice with his whole heart.²¹ This book was also Merton's introduction to Oriental mysticism. In his journal he wrote:

I spent most of the afternoon writing a letter to Aldous Huxley and when I was finished I thought: 'Who am I to be telling this guy about mysticism?' I reflect that until I read his book, Ends and Means, four years ago, I had never even heard of the word mysticism. The part he played in my conversion, by that book was very great. . . . Ends and Means taught me to respect mysticism.²²

In his autobiographical description of his conversion Merton commented that "the most important effect of the book [Ends and Means] on me was to make me start ransacking the university library [Columbia] for books on Oriental mysticism."²³

²¹Thomas Merton, The Seven Story Mountain (New York: Signet, 1948), p. 184.

²²Thomas Merton, The Secular Journal of Thomas Merton (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1959), p. 268.

²³Merton, The Seven Story Mountain, p. 184.

The principal benefit that Merton reported he gained from this reading in Oriental mysticism was a technique for going to sleep at night. At that time, he supposed that Oriental mysticism could be reduced to just such techniques. In relation to Christianity, Oriental mysticism was conceived by Merton as a natural phenomenon.²⁴ Some seeds, however, had been sown. After Merton was received into the Roman Catholic Church and had entered the Trappist monastery in Gethsemani, these seeds found nourishment in the soil of the Cistercian contemplative life.

There are two entries in his journal during 1949 that give a clue that Merton's dormant interest in Oriental mysticism was beginning to awaken. On June 4, he wrote of a visit by Archbishop Paul Yu-Pin of Nanking to the Abbey. The Archbishop spoke to the monks "about China and the contemplative life and Buddhist monasticism--and about the reproach that Buddhist's fling at us, that is, we are all very

²⁴Ibid., p. 185. Since Merton's conception of Oriental mysticism as a natural phenomenon is understood in a specific way by Catholics, the passage referred to in this reference will be quoted.

"Ultimately, I suppose, all Oriental mysticism can be reduced to techniques that do the same thing, but in a far more subtle and advanced fashion: and if that is true, it is not mysticism at all. It remains purely in the natural order. That does not make it evil, per se, according to Christian standards: but it does not make it good, in relation to the supernatural. It is simply more or less useless . . ."

The distinction here between natural and supernatural was radically questioned by Catholic theologians. The issue involved will be discussed at length in Chapter IV.

fine at building hospitals but we have no contemplatives."²⁵

Merton was impressed. About five months later, he manifested a more active interest when he wrote:

I think I shall ask permission to write to a Hindu who wrote me a letter about Pantanjali's yoga, and who is in Semla. I shall ask him to send us some books. A chemist who has been helping us with some paint jobs turned out to have been a postulant in a Zen Buddhist monastery in Hawaii and he spoke to the community about it in Chapter

During the last ten years of his life, Zen Buddhism was a frequent preoccupation of Merton. He published numerous essays, many of which are reprinted in his two collections entitled Zen and the Birds of Appetite and Mystics and Zen Masters. Notable among these essays is a dialogue between D. T. Suzuki and Merton which came at the beginning of the latter's interest in Zen. An important change had taken place in Merton's attitude toward Oriental mysticism. Initially, Merton saw Oriental mysticism as essentially world-denying. This is not surprising, since such is a common Western attitude toward Eastern spirituality. By the time he died, Merton had completely reversed his position. In an essay on Nirvana, he wrote:

Enlightenment is not a matter of trifling with the facticity of ordinary life and spiriting it away. As the Buddhists say, Nirvana is found

²⁵Thomas Merton, The Sign of Jonas (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1953), p. 197.

²⁶Ibid., p. 243.

in the midst of the world around us and truth is not somewhere else . . . Nirvana and Samsara are the same. This, I submit, implies not flight from the world, denigration of the world, repudiation of the world, but a real understanding of the value that is in the world.²⁷

This, in brief, is the essence of Merton's movement toward the East. One student of Merton sums it up by saying: "With respect to the religions of the East, his attitude changed from outright condescension to condescending approval and then, as he became better informed, to enthusiastic admiration."²⁸ In his enthusiasm, Merton wrote:

The author has attempted not merely to look at these other Traditions coldly and objectively from the outside, but, in some measure at least, to try to share in the values and the experience which they embody. In other words, he is not content to write about them without making then, as far as possible, 'his own.'²⁹

While Dom Aelred Graham, a British Benedictine, was living in the United States (1951-67), his interest in Oriental religions and particularly in Zen blossomed. Though he does not recall exactly when this interest began, Graham does remember that his father spoke to him "with

²⁷Thomas Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite (New York: New Directions, 1968), pp. 87-88.

²⁸C. McCormick, "The Zen Catholicism of Thomas Merton," Journal of Ecumenical Studies 9, 4 (Fall, 1972): p. 807.

²⁹Thomas Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters (New York: Dell, 1967), p. ix.

great reverence of the Buddha."³⁰ Graham also had some contact with Buddhism during his university days at Oxford. However, it was not until he became prior of the Portsmouth Priory in Rhode Island that this interest began to take shape.

During his stay in Portsmouth, Graham established many close friendships which were centered upon a common interest in Buddhism and in Zen. He became a fast friend of Thomas Merton and effected the meeting between Merton and a Buddhist monk in Bangkok.³¹ Occasionally, he would visit the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Buddhist Association and participate in their zazen.³² It was during these years--the early 1960s--that Graham wrote his well-known book called Zen Catholicism: A Suggestion.

In June 1967, at the age of sixty, Graham's second term as prior at Portsmouth came to an end. He then set out for the Far East to study and dialogue with representatives of Hinduism and Buddhism. During August, September, and October of 1967, he traveled in Japan and spoke to many Zen Buddhists. Graham entered these meetings in the spirit of a student eager to learn about, and probe as deeply as he

³⁰Dom Aelred Graham, The End of Religion: Autobiographical Explorations (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), p. 58.

³¹Ibid., p. 64.

³²Ibid., p. 66.

could, the spirit of Zen. After the trip was over he published a number of the conversations. One of the conclusions that Graham reached was that the Zen Buddhist tradition can enable Christians "to realize their own inheritance, their own tradition."³³

These five men, Enomiya-Lassalle, Dumoulin, Johnston, Merton, and Graham have authored the bulk of the published material on the meeting between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism.³⁴ There are a few other authors who have published small books or articles on the topic of this dissertation. One author is Donan Hahn Wakefield, a native of North Korea and a convert to Catholicism.³⁵ A second author is Thomas G. Hand, S.J. who spent five years in Japan as spiritual director of the Jesuit community at Sophia University in Tokyo.³⁶ A third is Peter Kreeft, a Roman Catholic philosopher who teaches at Boston College and who made contact with Buddhists and Christians in Japan.³⁷ The

³³Graham, Conversations, p. 120.

³⁴In my research I was unable to discover any other published material on the encounter between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism written by Roman Catholics. I do not include anyone in the dissertation who has not written explicitly on the above encounter.

³⁵Donan Hahn Wakefield, Journey into the Void (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1971).

³⁶Thomas Hand, "The Challenge of Zen," America 120 (February 8, 1969): 159-61.

³⁷Peter Kreeft, "Zen Buddhism and Christianity: An Experiment in Comparative Religion," Journal of Ecumenical Studies 8, 3 (Summer, 1971): 513-38.

noted Roman Catholic religionist, R. C. Zaehner, has devoted a chapter to Zen in his book, Concordant Discord, where he argues that Roman Catholicism most closely approximates the achievement of unity in diversity and diversity in unity.³⁸

Finally, mention must be made of a man who, while he has not attempted to reconcile Zen insights with Roman Catholic doctrine or spirit in writing, has lived the dialogue in himself. This man is Dr. John C. H. Wu. Thomas Merton has written that Dr. Wu "is not afraid to admit that he brought Zen, Taoism, Confucianism with him into Christianity."³⁹

This brief description of the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism points up a major issue that must continually be faced by Catholics. This issue is expressed in a passage in the Constitution on the Church of Vatican II which states:

While she transcends all limits of time and of race, the Church is destined to extend to all regions of the earth and so to enter into the history of mankind.⁴⁰

This statement gives expression to a double claim. The first claim is that Roman Catholicism, in its teaching and way of

³⁸Zaehner, Concordant Discord, pp. 279ff. This thesis is not contradicted by Zaehner in a more recent book, Zen, Drugs and Mysticism (New York: Pantheon, 1972).

³⁹Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 33.

⁴⁰Walter M. Abbott, ed., The Documents of Vatican II (New York: Guild Press, 1966), p. 26.

life, transcends all culture. This is the claim of universality. The second claim is that the teaching and spirit of Jesus, which is at the root of Roman Catholicism, can be embodied in any culture. This is the claim of particularity. The early Jesuit missionaries in Japan attempted to resolve these paradoxical claims through friendly tolerance and a cultural adaptation which would not be contrary to Catholic doctrine. Implicit in this resolution was the belief that even though many Zen monks were holy persons, they would have been at least enriched, if not transformed, through conversion to Catholicism. A Catholic, then, could have received much from Zen in culture but could have received nothing in respect to spirituality. Catholic involvement in the "way of tea" would have been a good test case as to the limitations that doctrine would put on cultural adaptation. A conclusion to this test case was unable to be arrived at because of the abrupt ending of the Western presence in Japan at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The issue of the paradoxical claim of universality and particularity is still a live question. Many contemporary missionaries in Japan attempt to resolve it in much the same manner as the early Jesuit missionaries. A few missionaries and other interested persons are seeking a different resolution. Enomiya-Lassalle and Johnston began with cultural adaptation. They attempted to come to a

profound understanding of Japanese culture and mind through study and practice of Zen. In this process they became aware that their encounter with Zen had resulted in a deepening of their own spirituality. These men remain committed Catholics. But in their meeting with Zen their Catholicism changed. They became aware of rich treasures in their own tradition. It is through Zen, according to their own witness, that they became more deeply involved in their Catholicism.

People from the early missionary endeavor and contemporary missionaries are both involved in evangelization. The goal of the earlier evangelization was conversion of the Japanese, and hence of Zen Buddhists, to Catholicism. The goal of some of the contemporary people interested in a meeting with Zen Buddhism is also conversion. In the latter case, the conversion is not one-sided. It is rather a conversion of themselves as well as the conversion of others. This latter type of conversion has the flavor of a dialogue in which the different parties present their own ground and remain open to the ground of the other party in the conversion. In dialogue both parties are open to change. The goal of dialogue is not so much that one party change the other as it is the openness of both parties to be changed. The change occurs in the dialogue.

This dissertation is an attempt to enter this dialogue between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism, to

discover the grounds, on which it has happened, to describe the issues involved, and to raise questions which could press the dialogue further.

CHAPTER I

THE GROUND OF THE MEETING BETWEEN ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND ZEN BUDDHISM

The Roman Catholics who have been and are at present engaged in a dialogue with Zen Buddhism have been introduced. The present chapter is devoted to an uncovering of the ground on which the dialogue can take place. The first part will be a description of the ground on which the persons engaged in the dialogue have experienced their meeting between these two traditions. The second and third parts will describe the ground of Zen and of Roman Catholicism respectively in the light of representative authors who have not specifically written about the meeting. By ground is meant the standpoint or the general approach the Roman Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen Buddhism take in discovering points of contact and differences between the two traditions. This ground includes the questions asked by these men as well as the aspects of Zen which they believe would deepen their own Christian position.

Roman Catholics in Dialogue with
Zen Buddhism

During the last ten years the Roman Catholic Church, both during the Vatican Council II and in its wake, has been attempting to renew itself in its structure and its spirit. The document of the Vatican Council II on "Non-Christian Religions" has expressed an openness toward these religious traditions which would have been seen as foreign to many of the sixteenth and nineteenth century missionaries to the East. This openness to the Orient would also appear as foreign to many contemporary Catholics. Thomas Merton points this out when he writes:

In some respects, progressive Christians were never less disposed to this kind of openness (to Asian religions). True, they approve all forms of communication and inter-religious dialogue on principle, but the new 'secular' 'post-Christian' Christianity, which is activist, antimystical, social and revolutionary, tends to take for granted a great deal of the Marxist assumptions about religion as the opium of the people. . . . But, knowing little or nothing about Asian religions, and associating Asia with opium anyway (conveniently forgetting that it was the West that forced opium into China by means of war!) they are still satisfied with the old clichés about 'life-denying Buddhism,' 'selfish navel gazing,' and Nirvana as a sort of drugged trance.¹

William Johnston describes this uneasiness in another way when he points out that it is "one of the ironies of history that the very points in Christianity that appeal to the Buddhist are precisely those that are now least in

¹Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 15.

fashion in the so-called Christian West."² Thus, at a time when the world is critically ready for a dialogue between East and West, many Western Christians and Catholics are neither ready for nor open to such a meeting. An exception to this general unreadiness is found in a growing interest among some Catholics in contemplation, both in itself and as related to liberation movements.³ This openness may point to an openness to Oriental spirituality, especially Zen.

Before the discussion of the ground of the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism is begun, some of the questions and interests of the people already engaged in the meeting will be presented. These questions are not addressed to Zen Buddhists only but are addressed to Catholics as well. Many of the people involved in the dialogue discuss what they consider Zen Buddhism can teach Roman Catholics. Johnston is deeply interested in the possibility of a Christian satori. He asks if it is possible, and if it is, how it would differ from Zen satori.⁴ The question Peter Kreeft asks is similar but much broader. He asks if it is possible to be a Zen Buddhist and a Christian simul-

²William Johnston, "Dialogue with Buddhism," Monchan-in-Information 2, 7 (September 1969): 3.

³James W. Douglas, Resistance and Contemplation (New York: Doubleday, 1972).

⁴William Johnston, The Stillpoint (New York: Fordham, 1970), pp. vii, 179-80; Christian Zen, pp. 96-97.

taneously.⁵

Johnston wonders if Zen can affect the entire West. He sees the need for Zen in the Western world as a counterbalance to a dehumanization of man at the hands of technology.⁶

Graham suggests that the greatest service of Zen to Christians is in the area of religion and spirituality. He asks if Zen can "be of service to Catholics . . . in elucidating certain aspects of the Church's own message."⁷ Johnston is convinced that Zen can be a good preparation, though not a substitute, for prayer.⁸ He has found Zen meditation to be a help in deepening his own prayer,⁹ especially by means of Zen method.¹⁰ But Johnston also perceives that Zen can be more than a method or preparation for prayer for the Christian. He suggests that it "can deepen the prayer life of those who are already contemplative."¹¹

⁵Kreeft, "Zen Buddhism," p. 514.

⁶Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 19.

⁷Dom Aelred Graham, Zen Catholicism (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), p. 10.

⁸William Johnston, "Zen and Christian Prayer," Cistercian Studies 5, 1 (1970): 60.

⁹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 5.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 178.

Graham suggests that Zen may further aid Catholics in broadening contemplation beyond the wall of "professional contemplatives," and also by pointing out that the contemplative state is not "an exclusive preoccupation with God . . . since God excludes nothing."¹² Enomiya-Lassalle sees Zen as a great help to the Christian spiritual life, the achievement of religious perfection, and the deeper understanding of religious truths.¹³ Johnston, finally, suggests that "the methodology of Zen, if adopted by a Christian, may well culminate in sudden conversion,"¹⁴ and also that "Zen can help us update and demythologize much of the theology that underlies Christian mysticism."¹⁵

If one is open to Zen, as these men are, a further question must be asked: on what grounds can the meeting take place? The most basic ground is that of common humanity. However, the meeting is specified further in terms of the "religious" dimension of human existence. A Catholic comes to the meeting as a person who also is a representative of a tradition within Christianity. In regard to Zen, it is not

¹²Graham, The Stillpoint, p. 178.

¹³Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen--Way to Enlightenment, pp. 9, 70.

¹⁴Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 19.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 44.

obvious that a Zen Buddhist is a representative of a tradition within Buddhism, nor is it obvious that Zen represents a "religious" tradition. The Catholic authors treated here recognize this problem and resolve it in different ways. The question they are asking concerns the Buddhist ground of their Zen partner in the dialogue.

Enomiya-Lassalle takes the simplest position. He believes that any comparison of Zen and Roman Catholicism must recognize that Buddhism is the cultural background of Zen.¹⁶ He believes at the same time that enlightenment is accessible to all, that it is not necessarily connected to any religious tradition.¹⁷ The position of Johnston is similar. He says that "traditional Zen has a background, a history, and a peculiar spirit of its own, and that it is religious--even though the modern tendency is to divorce it from Buddhism and to empty it of religious content."¹⁸ He also maintains that discursive reflection on this history and background "does not help one iota in the attainment of enlightenment which is only found by 'direct pointing at the soul.'"¹⁹ At one point in his book Christian Zen,

¹⁶Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation für Christen (1969), p. 8.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁸Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 17.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 19.

Johnston makes a distinction between Zen and Zen Buddhism. He sees the latter as a Buddhist sect; the former, he suggests, means simple meditation. It is on this basis that he justifies receiving Zen into Catholicism with little question. However, his most recent position may be derived from a question he formulated in a personal letter. He asks: "Can Christians merrily abandon the Buddhist ontology that underlies Zen? I think they cannot. To do so is unrealistic."²⁰ This comment implies the importance of the Buddhist dimension of Zen for the dialogue with Christians.

The significance of the Buddhist dimension of Zen is approached by Thomas Merton in a manner different from that of either Enomiya-Lassalle or Johnston. He says that the study of Zen as a religion or as a structure or as a system would by that very fact destroy Zen itself. He writes:

Zen is outside all particular structures and distinct forms and . . . it is neither opposed to them nor not-opposed to them. It neither denies them nor affirms them, loves them nor hates them, rejects them nor desires them. Zen is consciousness unstructured by particular form or particular system, a trans-cultural, trans-religious, transformed consciousness. It is therefore in a sense "void." But it can shine through this or that system, religious or irreligious, just as light can shine through glass that is blue, or green,

²⁰From a letter to the author by William Johnston, January 10, 1972.

or red, or yellow. If Zen has any preference it is for glass that is plain, has no color, and is "just glass."²¹

Thus, Merton attempts to hold a tension between a Zen that transcends structures, systems, or religion and a Zen that can be manifest in any structure, system, or religion.

Various approaches to the significance of Buddhism as a ground for Zen have been presented above from Roman Catholic points of view. The question of a Roman Catholic ground for a meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism must now be discussed. Dom Aelred Graham believes that for Zen to flower in the West it needs an appropriate context or ground in which it may take root.²² He perceives Catholicism to be the most fecund soil. He sees a hidden stream in Catholicism which carries a "wisdom tradition parallel to, and in some respects identified with, that from which Zen arose."²³ In fact, Graham goes so far as to say that "in applying certain insights from Zen to Catholicism . . . no foreign element is being injected into the situation."²⁴ This belief would in no way contradict the understanding which Merton had of Zen insofar as Zen can be manifested in any system or structure. Graham simply

²¹Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 4.

²²Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 139.

²³Ibid., p. 85. ²⁴Ibid., p. 20.

believes that Roman Catholicism might be the most fertile ground for Zen to take root in the West. In a discussion he had with Professor Masao Abe in Kyoto, August 26, 1967, Graham commented: "I've often suggested . . . that there's a much closer link between the underlying philosophy of Catholicism and Hinduism, Buddhism and Zen than there is between modern Protestant theology and those Eastern Traditions."²⁵ Abe, in response to Graham, suggests that "negative theology, the Via Negativa, has some similarity to the Buddhist position."²⁶

Concerning the dialogues held at Oiso and Kyoto, Johnston observes that while there was a deep spirit of cordiality and friendship, it was discovered that there was not one philosophical or theological tenet that was held in common. The common ground of the dialogue was found in the soil of religious experience.²⁷ The "religious experience" on the Christian side, which is seen to be comparable to the Zen satori, is to be found in the Christian mystical tradition, especially under the category "contemplation." In 1970 Johnston suggested that Zen and Christian mysticism could be thus categorized. He bases this suggestion on

²⁵ Graham, Conversations, p. 20.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Johnston, The Stillpoint, pp. xi, 174; Christien Zen, p. 11.

Thomas Aquinas' definition of contemplation as "a simple intuition of the truth."²⁸

Johnston, however, qualifies his suggestion that a common meeting ground may be found in religious experience in terms of satori and mysticism as joined in contemplation. He points out that while "everything in Zen is oriented toward enlightenment and toward the preservation of its spirit once found,"²⁹ the same is not true of Christianity which, "though it contains a strong current of mysticism, is not essentially mystical."³⁰ Johnston makes a further qualification when he writes:

Zen and Christian mysticism can be classed together philosophically and phenomenologically--but not theologically.³¹

This statement would seem to contradict what Johnston wrote about the result of the dialogues in which no philosophical or theological tenets were found to be common. However, to find the ground in "religious experience" is to operate phenomenologically. Here too a qualification must be made. Johnston continues the above statement:

Nor does this mean that phenomenologically they are exactly the same (for experiences that differ theologically could not be identical phenomenologically); but they are sufficiently similar to be put in the same generic classification.³²

²⁸ Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 127.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 122.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 15, 123.

³¹ Ibid., p. 140.

³² Ibid.

So far, with qualification, a ground for the meeting between Zen and Christianity is found by Johnston at the phenomenological level, that is, in "religious experience." He does not stop here but raises a further question:

If however, there is a certain kinship between the mystical experience of the Christian and that of the Buddhist, one must naturally ask if mutual understanding in the realm of religious experience (which is something subjective) can lead to agreement on something objective. What does religious experience (be it Christian or Buddhist) prove in the ontological order?³³

While acknowledging that "religious experience" does not prove the truth of Christian or Buddhist dogma or theory, Johnston does suggest that "it may throw light on ultimate reality."³⁴ However, just as a distinction must be made between phenomenology and theology, so also one must be made between phenomenology and ontology. More dialogue is needed, especially concerning the meaning of Oriental nothingness and the Christian mystery of God, before the jumps from phenomenology to ontology or theology can be made. The connection must be made, according to Johnston, because,

While experience is the primary thing, we eventually must have a philosophy and a theology to protect it, circumscribe it and distinguish the true from the counterfeit.³⁵

Johnston's present position acknowledges that a meeting on

³³ Johnston, "Dialogue with Buddhism," p. 5.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁵ Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. xii.

the level of ontology is necessary. Whether or not a common ground may be found in ontology is open to further investigation.

The ground that Thomas Merton takes in his meeting with Zen is, first of all, deeply personal. He was not content with simply writing about Zen. (The same is true for Johnston and Enomiya-Lassalle, who engage in zazen as a part of their lives.) Merton attempts to make Zen "his own" by trying to share in its values and experience.³⁶ In this attempt he perceives that a major problem is the use of Western categories to describe Oriental "contemplation." He writes:

We have read our abstract Western divisions into an Oriental experience that has nothing whatever to do with them, and we have also presumed that Oriental contemplation corresponded in every way with Western philosophical modes of contemplation and spirituality. Hence the mystifying use of terms like "individualism," "subjectivism," "pantheism," etc., one on top of the other, in our discussion of something like Zen. Actually these terms are worse than useless in this case. They serve to make Zen utterly inaccessible.³⁷

The manner of approach that Merton suggests is that a Christian try to discuss the nature of Buddhist enlightenment and then try to find some analogy to it in Christian thought.³⁸ There are, he tells us, three grounds on which

³⁶Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. ix.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 16-17.

³⁸Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 80.

this analogy can be made. First, there is the plane of mysticism and mystical experience. Merton finds this approach limited for the reason that "Zen does not even claim to be "mystical," and the most widely read authority on the subject, Daisetz Suzuki, has expended no little effort in trying to deny the fact that Zen is "mysticism." Merton concludes: "This, however, is perhaps more a matter of semantics than anything else."³⁹

A more serious difficulty is one which Merton mentions a few times, that is, that "mysticism" is "complicated by theological problems on the Christian side and by an absence of theological content which would offer material for comparison on the Buddhist side."⁴⁰ In another place he writes:

Zen is not theology, and it makes no claim to deal with theological truth in any form whatever.⁴¹

These comments are not the only ones Merton makes in regard to the possibility of theology as the ground of the meeting between Zen and Roman Catholicism. At the end of his introduction to John G. H. Wu's book, The Golden Age of Zen, he comments on D. T. Suzuki's interest in the Christian dogma of the Trinity. Merton suggests that this interest,

³⁹Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 12.

⁴⁰Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 80.

⁴¹Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. ix.

would seem to indicate that the real area for investigation of analogies and correspondences between Christianity and Zen might after all be theology rather than psychology or asceticism. At least theology is not excluded, but it must be theology as experienced in Christian contemplation, not the speculative theology of textbooks and disputations.⁴²

This statement does not contradict the previous statement concerning theology. Rather it qualifies it by suggesting that the theology used as a ground must be a lived theology.

The second ground for the analogy in Christian thought to Zen enlightenment mentioned by Merton is the ethical ground, that is, a comparison of Buddhist compassion with Christian charity. This approach would be inadequate, he suggests, because Christian charity is a theological virtue and Zen does not deal with theology. The inadequacy, however, would be overcome if the theology, as indicated above, is a theology experienced in contemplation.⁴³

Merton, finally, suggests that the possible meeting place is to be found on the plane of metaphysics.⁴⁴ This suggestion must also be qualified. The ground of the meeting between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism is not abstract metaphysics but rather, "a concrete and lived ontology which explains itself not in theoretical propositions but in acts emerging out of a certain quality of consciousness and of

⁴²Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 58; Merton's introduction to Wu's book is reprinted here.

⁴³Ibid., p. 80.

⁴⁴Ibid.

awareness."⁴⁵

Merton thus perceives that a possible ground on which the analogy between Buddhist enlightenment and Christian thought can be made is both theological and ontological. The theology and ontology, on the Christian side, must be a lived or contemplative theology or a concrete lived ontology.

What then is the ground of the dialogue between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism? In order to respond to this question, a previous question was raised: Is Zen bound to its Buddhist background? Enomiya-Lassalle recognizes the Buddhist cultural background of Zen yet at the same time sees Zen as trans-religious. Because of this trans-religious spirit of Zen, Catholicism does not have to be afraid that Zen will distort its fundamental spirit and dogma. Johnston's approach recognizes the Buddhist ontology as essential to Zen. However, he has found that, in dialogue, the common ground is in religious experience, or in phenomenology. Johnston is further convinced that a philosophy and theology are needed to safeguard the "experience." Graham sees the need for Zen to be expressed in Western categories in order that it be communicated to the West. He believes that the Catholic philosophical and theological traditions are most suitable for this task. Finally,

⁴⁵Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. ix.

Merton points out that while Zen transcends religious or cultural or philosophical structures, it can be manifest in any culture. While he suggests that Zen and Catholicism do not mix too well, he sees the possibility of a meeting in terms of a lived ontology and a theology nurtured and experienced in contemplation.

Zen Buddhist Writers

The first part of this chapter considered the nature of the ground of the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism from the points of view of Roman Catholics who have written about it. Their attempts to uncover the ground arose not only from their appreciation of Roman Catholicism but also from their understanding of Zen. The Zen authors to be discussed in the second part of this chapter do not write in terms of a meeting with Roman Catholicism but rather write in order to give expression, as well as they are able, to Zen. The next few pages will be a presentation of the present author's interpretation of their approach to a ground in Zen, as a hypothetical response to the issue as raised by the Roman Catholic authors in the first part of the chapter. The major Zen author to be described is D. T. Suzuki.

In a number of his writings, Suzuki discusses the relation between Zen and Buddhism. His view is not simply that Zen is Buddhism nor that Zen is not Buddhism. The

question is more complex. In its origin Zen developed from the cross-fertilization of speculative Indian Buddhism with the concrete, earthy spirit of the Chinese people. Suzuki does not deny that Zen is derived from Buddhism. He writes:

Undoubtedly the main ideas of Zen are derived from Buddhism, and we cannot but consider it a legitimate development of the latter.⁴⁶

Suzuki is also aware of another approach to this question. The followers of Zen claim that they are transmitting the essence of Buddhism, that they have stripped Buddhism of all its external doctrinal and historical paraphernalia and have penetrated its spirit which is the spirit of the Buddha himself.⁴⁷ Hisamatsu expresses this when he writes:

Zen is not one particular school within Buddhism; it is, rather, the root source of Buddhism.⁴⁸

Suzuki affirms this when he says that the articulation of the Zen experience or its intellectual content could be supplied by a system of thought which is not necessarily Buddhist.⁴⁹ In this sense, Zen is independent of Buddhism, that is, of its terminology and models of thinking.⁵⁰ Zen,

⁴⁶D. T. Suzuki, An Introduction to Zen (New York: Grove, 1934), p. 37.

⁴⁷D. T. Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series (New York: Grove, 1949), pp. 54, 357.

⁴⁸Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," The Eastern Buddhist: New Series 1, 1 (September 1965): 22.

⁴⁹D. T. Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture (New Jersey: Princeton, 1959), p. 44.

⁵⁰Suzuki, Essays in Zen: First Series, p. 357.

Suzuki suggests, is the ultimate foundation of all philosophy and religion. It cannot be confined by any one, yet is the "root source" of all.⁵¹ Thus, while Zen has its historical roots in Buddhism, it is not confined to Buddhism. In manifesting the spirit of Buddhism, Zen, by that very fact, transcends Buddhism. Therefore, Zen can be spoken of as Buddhist yet it does not bind itself absolutely to Buddhism as a religion.

Before discussing whether Zen finds its ground in religion, philosophy, asceticism, mysticism, or psychology, something must be said about what Zen is. D. T. Suzuki summarizes this in many ways in many books. In one place he writes:

Zen, being life itself, contains everything that goes into the make-up of life; Zen is poetry, Zen is philosophy, Zen is morality. Wherever there is life-activity, there is Zen. As long as we cannot imagine life to be limited in any way, Zen is present in every one of our experiences. . . .

When I say that Zen is life, I mean that Zen is not to be confined within conceptualization, that Zen is what makes conceptualization possible, and therefore that Zen is not to be identified with any particular brand of "ism."⁵²

Thus, according to Suzuki, Zen must not be identified with any "ism" which would include any academic discipline or any category. Yet Zen is present wherever there is life, hence is the very condition for the possibility of these

⁵¹Ibid., p. 268.

⁵²D. T. Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, ed. William Barrett (New York: Doubleday, 1956), p. 259.

"isms" or categories or disciplines.

Suzuki constantly repeats that "personal experience is everything in Zen."⁵³ He says this more forcefully when he writes that "Zen is emphatically a matter of personal experience; if anything can be called radically empirical, it is Zen."⁵⁴ What does Suzuki mean by "personal experience"? He points this out explicitly when he writes:

By personal experience it is meant to get at the fact at first hand and not through any intermediary, whatever this may be. . . . Zen abhors anything coming between the fact and ourselves.⁵⁵

When a human person is deeply challenged by a life problem, Zen does not appeal to book knowledge as a solution. It rather appeals directly to facts of personal experience. Why is this so? Suzuki writes:

When it comes to the question of life itself we cannot wait for the ultimate solution to be offered by the intellect, even if it could do so. We cannot suspend even for a moment our life-activity for philosophy to unravel its mysteries.⁵⁶

Thus, the ultimate authority and fundamental ground of Zen, according to Suzuki, is not simply to be found in knowledge or any external authority. In Zen "absolute faith is placed

⁵³Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 33.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁵⁵Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series, p. 19.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 18.

in a man's own inner being."⁵⁷ This does not exclude external authorities but rather points out that these authorities are no authorities unless they are in touch with and arise from "within." In Zen, the Zen experience is final and is its own authority.⁵⁸ According to Suzuki this experience,

is the ultimate truth, not born of relative knowledge. . . . It must be realized directly within oneself: no outside authorities are to be relied upon. Even the Buddha's teachings and the master's discourses, however, deep and true they are, do not belong to one so long as they have not been assimilated into his being, which means that they are to be made to grow directly out of one's own living experience. This realization is called satori.⁵⁹

The groundwork is now laid out for a discussion of Suzuki's understanding of Zen's relation to a variety of sciences--philosophy, psychology, asceticism, religion, and mysticism.

It must first be observed that Suzuki uses the words philosophy and metaphysics interchangeably. By philosophy he means abstraction, that is, nonconcreteness, logical acuteness,⁶⁰ analysis,⁶¹ conceptualization,⁶² a network of

⁵⁷Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 44.

⁵⁸Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 150.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 150.

⁶⁰D. T. Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: Second Series (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1953), pp. 52-53.

⁶¹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 38.

⁶²Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 261; The Field of Zen (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 28.

ideas.⁶³ Each of these, especially logic, is understood precisely as "the dualistic mode of thinking."⁶⁴ This way of philosophy neither destroys ignorance utterly⁶⁵ nor does it satisfy the human religious yearning.⁶⁶ The Buddha himself "refused to answer metaphysical problems."⁶⁷ Zen, according to Suzuki, as it attempts to transmit the very spirit of the Buddha, has no philosophy of its own.⁶⁸ Under no circumstances is it to be confused with philosophy.⁶⁹ The metaphysics of Zen consists, as it were, of "practical wisdom and concrete sense facts."⁷⁰

From what has just been said, it would seem that Zen is absolutely nonphilosophical. Suzuki, however, recognizes that "we cannot put a stop to the progress of philosophical inquiries any more than to our breathing."⁷¹ Insofar as Zen includes all of life, the process of conceptualization is inevitable. Thus, "Zen must have its

⁶³Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 28.

⁶⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 28.

⁶⁵Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series,
p. 138.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 61. ⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 150.

⁶⁹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 107

⁷⁰Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: Second Series,
p. 53.

⁷¹Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series,
p. 18.

philosophy,"⁷² but it must not be identified with any system of philosophy.⁷³ Rather, as has already been pointed out, Zen is the spirit of all philosophies.⁷⁴ Therefore, while Zen is not exclusively philosophy, it does not exclude philosophy but is the very "root source" of any and all philosophy.

While the Zen experience, according to Suzuki, may be interpreted from a psychological point of view and has a psychological dimension, it is not exclusively psychology. A psychological interpretation of the Zen experience would remain in the finite world of relativity.⁷⁵ As with the philosophical approach to Zen, Zen is also not psychology. Psychology arises from the living experience, which is the final authority in Zen.⁷⁶

An outside view of Zen could conclude that it is a rigid ascetical system. This has some validity insofar as Zen, according to Suzuki, does teach a form of detachment and self-control.⁷⁷ Such practices, however, are not engaged

⁷²Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 261.

⁷³Ibid., .

⁷⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 44.

⁷⁵D. T. Suzuki, Erich From, and Richard DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis (New York: Grove, 1960), p. 32. The psychological self is equated with the "ethical" self, and contrasted with the "metaphysical" self.

⁷⁶Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 150.

⁷⁷Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 347.

in for their own sake but rather for the "maturing" of one's moral character.⁷⁸

It is while pointing out that Zen is not merely asceticism that Suzuki suggests its religious dimension. He writes:

. . . if we imagine there is nothing more (than asceticism) in Zen, we entertain a very superficial view of it. The Zen insights go far deeper into the source of life, where Zen is truly religious. By this I mean Zen is in close touch with Reality; indeed, Zen takes hold of it and lives it, and this is where Zen is religious.⁷⁹

This Reality is not an abstraction but rather direct, vital, and energizing insofar as it "is taken hold of in the midst of the concrete living facts of the universe, and not abstracted from them by means of thought."⁸⁰ To see religion in this way as Reality, is not the sense of religion as it is popularly understood, that is, in terms of a God, worship, ceremonial rites, and a future life. Zen is not a religion in the latter sense.⁸¹ The Reality by which Suzuki points to Zen's religiousness is that by which Zen is also not a religion. That Reality is the source of all religions⁸² and that from which every religious faith must spring.⁸³

⁷⁸Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series, p. 343.

⁷⁹Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 347.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 39.

⁸²Ibid., p. 44.

⁸³Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series, p. 268.

The same may be said, according to Suzuki, in regard to Zen as mysticism. If mysticism is understood as quietism, as an exercise in tranquillization, as inactivity, then Zen is not mysticism.⁸⁴ Zen is a taking hold of life, not a stopping of the flow of life. In this there is a quiet and a calm which is not mere idleness or inactivity but a silence which thunders in the midst of this world.⁸⁵

Thus, while Zen is not to be simply subsumed under any one of the categories of philosophy, psychology, asceticism, religion, or mysticism, or even all of these taken together, it is that from which each and all of these disciplines grow. Zen is the very condition for the possibility of these disciplines. The ground of Zen, according to Suzuki, may be found in any discipline but only if that discipline itself is the flowering of personal experience or the expression of the lived concrete.

It has been seen that the Roman Catholics in dialogue with Zen Buddhism attempted to articulate the ground of their meeting with Zen. Their articulation manifested their own understanding of the grounds of both Zen and Catholicism. The thought of D. T. Suzuki was then presented in the preceding pages in regard to the ground of

⁸⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 111.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 36.

Zen. The final task of this chapter is the presentation of a specifically Catholic description of the ground of Roman Catholicism which is not an expression of the ground of the Zen-Catholic meeting but simply of the ground of Catholicism.

Roman Catholic Theologian:
Karl Rahner

Karl Rahner, a Catholic theologian not involved in the Zen-Catholic meeting, has given expression to the ground of Catholicism in his presentation of the ground of his theology which is Thomist in spirit. Many theological textbooks purporting to be Thomistic are quite sterile. One reason for this, according to Rahner, is because "theology and religious life seldom form a truly living unity."⁸⁶ If one is moved to pursue theology out of a vital religious life, that theology can be dynamic and constantly meeting new questions. Rahner sees the relation between theology and the spiritual life as eminently characteristic of Thomas Aquinas. Thus, Rahner writes of him:

Thomas' theology is his spiritual life and his spiritual life is his theology. With him we do not find the horrible difference which is often to be observed in later theology, between theology and spiritual life. He thinks theology

⁸⁶Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, trans. Karl-H Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), 6.

because he needs it in his spiritual life as its most essential condition and thinks theology in such a way that it can become really important for life in the concrete.⁸⁷

Rahner, as a disciple of Thomas, attempts to pursue theology in the spirit of his master. In all his writings, which include philosophical-theological investigations, Sunday homilies, and radio talks, Rahner attempts to communicate a religious experience expressed as the living encounter between man and God. Thus, he writes:

The way Christian faith is explained often fails to make it clear that we are dealing ultimately not with concepts and propositions about the mystery of God, but with the living encounter between the inner man and God, where God communicates himself to man and man accepts him by God's power.⁸⁸

For Rahner, faith as the encounter between God and man is the ground of theology.

Rahner conceives of theology as the "science of faith."⁸⁹ As a science, theology is a "conscious and methodical explanation and explication."⁹⁰ As a science of faith, it is an explication "of the divine revelation received and grasped in faith."⁹¹ Thus, the ground of

⁸⁷Karl Rahner, Everyday Faith (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 188.

⁸⁸Karl Rahner, Do You Believe in God? trans. Richard Strachan (New York: Newman, 1969), p. 105.

⁸⁹Karl Rahner, "Theology," Sacramentum Mundi 6 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 234.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 234.

⁹¹Ibid.

theology is revelation as heard in faith. There is an intrinsic connection between theology as a science and theology as grounded in revelation encountered in faith. This connection is not immediately evident in Catholic theology. Insofar as theology is a science, a conscious element is present. Insofar as theology is a science of faith, grace is involved. Thus, a theologian attempts to articulate consciously the experience of grace. But this articulation is problematic for Rahner if grace is considered to be a reality which is strictly supernatural. The issue here is not whether one can or cannot be conscious of grace. Rather the issue is what the effect of one or the other of these conclusions is on the theological enterprise.

If one is not conscious of grace, one does not have to be a believer in order to do theology. Then revelation can be grasped by "natural reason" in the same way as by "believing reason."⁹² Faith, then, would be separate from theology and vice-versa, which is contrary to the thinking of Rahner. The way in which Rahner sees theology as a science of faith provides further insight into the ground of his theology.

According to Rahner, theology is simply a "further development, an unfolding, of that basic subjective reflec-

⁹²Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 49.

tion which already takes place in the mere obedient listening to the Word of God, i.e., in faith itself."⁹³ Thus, theological reflection is grounded in faith. The question arises as to how theology itself is a moment of faith. It is Rahner's response to this question that manifests his understanding of the inner relation of theology as a science and theology as faith. He says:

Because, insofar as faith is always the listening by a concrete human being to the Word of God, the real fact of having heard, the success of the listening to the Word of God which is actually present only when it is heard and understood, can always happen solely in a simultaneous understanding of faith, that is, in a confrontation (which naturally admits of many degrees) of God's message with what man already is, with man insofar as he is a spiritual being and with the man as he is listening to this message. Since the analysis by the hearer of what he is told is an inevitable moment in the process of hearing itself, and since utter non-understanding destroys even the hearing itself, a certain degree of theology belongs as an inner moment to hearing itself, and the mere hearing in faith is already a human activity in which man's own subjectivity, together with its logic, its experience, native concepts, and perspectives, already enters into play.⁹⁴

Thus, for Rahner, faith is a hearing or listening by a human being who, by the very fact of hearing analyzes what is heard. This is itself a dimension of the hearing. Without it there would be no real hearing. Theology does not, then, happen in a vacuum. It is an inner moment of faith of a concrete human being with all that designation (concrete human) involves. Rahner states this more concisely when

⁹³Ibid., pp. 48-49.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 48.

he writes:

Theology is not in fact merely an exercise of the habitus fidei purely as such but an exercise of the habitus scientiae which is however permeated and supported by the habitus fidei, so that the-ology always is and must be 'fide illustrata.'⁹⁵

Theology, then, is not merely a science, that is, a methodic reflection on revelation as heard in faith, but also an intrinsic element of this faith itself.⁹⁶ For Rahner theology is grounded in faith, which is the encounter by the believer with God in revelation. If theology were not an intrinsic element or inner moment of faith, it would be reduced to a science of religion.⁹⁷ Thus, for Rahner, the ground of Catholicism which is the ground of his theology, is a living faith which itself is the encounter between God and man.

Conclusion

The issue of this chapter is not whether the "ground" of Roman Catholicism and the "ground" of Zen Buddhism are the same or different. The issue is: What is the starting point of the meeting? According to Suzuki the point of departure would be the central "experience" of Zen. For Rahner it would be the fundamental "experience"

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

⁹⁶ Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 6 (Baltimore: Helicon, 1969), 90-91.

⁹⁷ Rahner, "Theology," Sacramentum Mundi, p. 235.

of the Christian.

Johnston touches on these "grounds" when he asks about the possibility of a Christian satori. He thus touches on the central "experience" of Zen which is satori. He touches on the Christian "ground" when he discusses prayer and contemplation. Insofar as prayer and contemplation are understood by him as an encounter between the revealing God and the responding human, they can be understood as dealing with the "ground" of Christianity as understood by Rahner.

Merton also begins with the Buddhist enlightenment as the ground of Zen and with theology experienced in contemplation as the "ground" of Christianity. Thus, both Johnston and Merton begin with the fundamental "experience" of both Zen and Catholicism.

A fundamental question in regard to the "ground" of Zen and that of Christianity is whether or not the central "experiences" of these traditions can be articulated and, if so, how. A fuller response to this question is made in Chapter VIII. The beginning of a response from Rahner's point of view is that the articulation of Christian faith is itself a dimension of that faith, that is, theology is a dimension of faith. For Merton the theology must be a "lived theology," a theology grounded in contemplation. Since contemplation, for the Christian, involves the fundamental Christian "experience," its articulation

would be, at least, a pointing to this "experience." It is not evident, however, that the theology of contemplation is itself a dimension of contemplation. Merton, however, does explicitly point to theology as a ground on which the meeting can take place. Implicit in this affirmation is the assumption that the articulation of the "ground" is a part of the "ground."

The point of this chapter is not whether or not one can speak of the fundamental "experience" of either Zen or Catholicism. It is simply that the meeting must be grounded in this "experience," that is, the meeting must deal with Zen enlightenment on the one hand, and Christian faith as the encounter between God and human beings, on the other hand. It is assumed that insofar as both Catholics and Zen Buddhists have spoken or written, they believe that something can be said, even if that something is judged to be quite inadequate. The adequacy of what is said, is not, in this chapter, the point of discussion.

The questions which can be asked here are whether the "ground" of Zen as understood by Suzuki and the "ground" of Catholicism as articulated by Rahner are to some degree common or if these "grounds" are radically different. This question can be put in another manner: Is there a correlation between the realization of Zen and Christian faith understood as the encounter between God and a human person? Implicit in this question is the further question pertaining

to the similarity or nonsimilarity of God in Christianity and the Buddha-Nature in Zen.

The key to a response to this question is the issue of the one and the many. According to Suzuki, the Zen realization is nondualistic. Christian faith as an encounter between God and the human would seem to be radically dualistic if God is understood as simply and totally other than the human. The fundamental issue is whether the Zen realization is simply nondualistic and whether Christian faith is simply dualistic. The beginning of a response to this question is the subject of the next chapter.

Furthermore, in order to discuss the grounds of Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism, it is necessary to discuss the metaphysical presuppositions as they give expression to these grounds. According to Johnston, even though the ground of the encounter is found to be in personal experience, it is necessary for a Christian to face the ontological articulations of these experiences. This means that the Catholic must confront the core of Zen, which, according to Hisamatsu, is "Oriental Nothingness." The "ground" of Zen, then, is "nothingness," which "Nothingness" is Nonbeing, which is beyond the distinction between being and nonbeing and, hence, cannot be identified with the nonbeing, which is distinguished from being. Since faith in God is fundamental in Catholicism, and since God

is the ground of that faith and, hence, the ground of Catholicism, and since in Catholic Thomistic philosophical-theology God is understood as "Subsistent Being," the question must be posed as to whether or not the grounds of Zen and Catholicism are radically different.

CHAPTER II

THE ONE AND THE MANY

The first chapter discussed the ground of the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism. The second chapter will present a theme which is considered by the Roman Catholics in dialogue with Zen as central to this meeting. This theme, the one and the many, can be discussed in diverse ways. It is one way of describing many other themes, such as: the immanence and transcendence of God; the relations between God as creator and the creation; monotheism and polytheism and pantheism. In the many treatments of this core issue of the one and the many, the authors to be discussed have prefaced their remarks by stating that they could make remarks. This preface is made because of the difficulty the authors face when they attempt to write of the core issue. The difficulty lies in the realization that when one reaches the "core," silence thunders. The speaker is left speechless. Thus, an apologia is made for speaking. "He who speaks, does not know. He who does not speak, knows," suggests the Chinese Taoist saying which is paradoxical precisely

because it speaks about not speaking.¹ The author of this dissertation, unlike the Catholic authors to be discussed in the first part of this chapter, presumes to speak first and then, in a later chapter,² to reflect on the possibility of speaking.

The structure of this chapter is like that of the first chapter: the theme of the one and the many is discussed first in the light of the writings of Roman Catholics who have met Zen, followed by a discussion of that theme in the Zen Buddhism of Suzuki and Hisamatsu, and that, in turn, by a description of Rahner's approach to the theme. Finally, a few questions will be raised as to a direction the meeting might take.

The Theme of the One and the Many in
the Writings of Roman Catholics in
Dialogue with Zen

William Johnston discusses the theme of the one and the many in context of his discussion of Zen Buddhism and Christian mysticism. Both of these traditions are species of what Johnston calls "vertical thinking," "in which the mind spirals down to the core of one's being."³ Having said this, he then raises two questions: "First what

¹Thomas Merton, The Way of Chuang Tzu (New York: New Directions, 1965), p. 82.

²See Chapter VIII.

³Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 66.

causes this 'going down' process? Second, what does one find or touch when one reaches the center of the sphere?"⁴ The second question is of interest here. What is this "center of the sphere"? God? The True Self? Ultimate Reality? The Void? Is "it" even a "what"? In both Zen and Christian mysticism, the process of "going down" involves the "seeing into one's own nature, the loss of the empirical ego, the enlightenment experience beyond subject and object. . . . Both promote some kind of psychic wholeness and unification."⁵ A major difference, however, according to Johnston, can be found in Zen enlightenment and Christian mysticism. For Johnston, enlightenment in Zen is an experience of unity, while enlightenment for the Christian is an experience of unity and diversity. This distinction is described in the following discussion of Johnston's understanding of Zen enlightenment and Christian mystical experience.

In both of his books on Christianity and Zen, Johnston describes Zen enlightenment in a similar manner. When speaking of Zen meditation in The Stillpoint, he writes:

It will be clear, I believe, that Zen meditation is a process of unification in which the whole personality is harmonized in a oneness which reaches its climax with a complete absence of subject-object consciousness in satori.⁶

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Ibid., p. 76.

⁶Ibid., p. 4.

A little later in the same book, Johnston writes:

Enlightenment is an experience of absolute unity; it is beyond subject and object; the empirical ego is so submerged that there is no longer 'I' and 'it' but pure existence or 'is-ness.'⁷

In a more recent book, Christian Zen, Johnston states the problem in a different way:

. . . if Christianity and Buddhism cross spiritual swords, the issue at stake is monism versus dualism . . . So it comes down to the basic problem: Are there many things or is there only one thing?⁸

The answer that Zen gives to these questions, according to Johnston, is that there is "one thing." He tells us that in Zen there is no duality. "All is one. This is the so-called monism that underlies all Mahayana Buddhism."⁹ While speaking of the koan "Mu," Johnston sees it as a technique to bring about the rejection of dualism of any kind. He writes:

I am identified with Mu; I am one with the rain pattering on the roof or the cloud floating in the sky. No longer 'I' and 'it' or 'I' and 'thou,' but only 'is.'¹⁰

Another aspect of the rejection of dualism is what Johnston calls a Zen "spring-cleaning of the mind," which is then immediately referred to as the cleaning of a mirror

⁷Ibid., p. 20.

⁸Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 21.

⁹Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁰Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 7.

to create the void.¹¹ The process of "spring-cleaning" is not limited to a certain time or place or activity.

Johnston points out that:

Zen insists strongly on the age quod agis frame of mind which sees all things in their existential nudity without forethought or arriere pensee; that is why Zen people will often tell you that Zen is eating, Zen is walking, Zen is sleeping, and so on.¹²

Zen is all of these activities insofar as, by reason of enlightenment, the personality is unified, exists in the condition of "is-ness," and "sees" directly the "is-ness" of all in that all is one. The Zen enlightenment is absolute unity. It is.

A major point that Johnston emphasizes about the enlightenment of Christian mystics is that while

the experience of complete and utter unity beyond subject and object is by no means unknown in the Christian mystics. . . . this unitive prayer, when it reaches its peak point, contains an element of diversity or separation within the very unity.¹³

Is there one or are there many? The Christian mystic, according to Johnston, would respond: "Both one and many. Both monism and dualism!"

Johnston is quite aware of the duality present in popular Christian belief in God. He bewails the popular concept of God as "out there" and the human person as

¹¹Ibid., p. 5.

¹²Ibid., p. 7.

¹³Ibid., pp. 39, 40, 77.

"here." While speaking of God, he recognizes that "God is all in all . . . but there can also be dialogue between creature and Creator."¹⁴ "I" and God are one, yet "I" and God are two. Here, again, is the one and the many, unity and duality. While Christianity has, according to Johnston, placed much emphasis, maybe too much, on the duality of God and man, it must be aware of the unity. Being aware of this, it will have a more difficult time in denoting Zen as necessarily atheism.¹⁵

To sum up Johnston's position, Zen and Christian enlightenments are similar insofar as both involve a consciousness of unity. They are different in that the Christian enlightenment also involves a sense of duality which is not present in Zen. Both unity and diversity are aspects of the "relationship" between God and man for the Christian.

Hugo Enomiya-Lassalle articulates his understanding of the question of the one and the many in the context of his discussions of Zen and Christian enlightenments and God. He points out that enlightenment is interpreted by the Buddhist in terms of the oneness of all being and by a monotheist as being one with God. Each attempts to explain the "same experience" according to his own

¹⁴ Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 27.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 8, 26.

Weltanschauung. But the enlightenment proves no particular Weltanschauung as the correct one. For, Enomiya-Lassalle writes:

Enlightenment as such is accessible to all, as long as one chooses the right way. In itself it is neither Buddhist nor Christian nor necessarily connected with any religious confession.¹⁶

However, having said this, Enomiya-Lassalle related enlightenment to his belief in God. After suggesting that the enlightenment experience may be called an experience of the "to be" or of the "to be as such," he says that "satori lies at least in the direction of an experience of God, for God is the origin of every created being and the experience of the 'to be' must necessarily in some way include its origin."¹⁷ This comment is developed by Enomiya-Lassalle when he points out that satori can be useful not only for "getting closer to God" but it can "lead us along the line that ends in the vision of God."¹⁸ The very "getting closer to God" or "coming nearer to God" is, according to Lassalle, the realization of "the direct vision of God in a union of love,"¹⁹ Enlightenment thus provides a quite favorable disposition for the grace of union with God.²⁰

In a later book, while making a comparison between satori and infused contemplation, Enomiya-Lassalle describes

¹⁶Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 35.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 73.

²⁰Ibid., p. 92.

the two as the same except for the Christian emphasis on a personal God. Both involve a "seeing" or a "viewing" which is said to be "simple" or "undifferentiated." Both are an experience of perfect unity.²¹

Enomiya-Lassalle is also convinced that the Zen monk could "come to a belief in God by means of the experience of enlightenment,"²² While the Zen monk would not be happy to be categorized as an atheist,²³ neither would he give expression to a belief in the existence of a personal God as Christians do.²⁴ He would respond to the question, "Do you believe in God?" by saying, "No." He would also respond negatively to the assertion: "Then, you do not believe in God." Enomiya-Lassalle further asserts that if Zen monks "did come to a belief in God, they would be silent about it."²⁵ Enomiya-Lassalle resolves this contradiction by attempting to show that Zen enlightenment is, in a certain sense, an experience of God. His reasoning is as follows.

²¹Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, the schema.

²²Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 77.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, p. 84.

²⁵Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 79.

Buddhist enlightenment is an experience of being as one or with no dualism. If this experienced being is relative, then satori would not be a "vision of essence." Therefore, the being is absolute being which is ultimate and absolute reality. Therefore, the Zen vision of essence in the experience of absolute being is equivalent to an experience of God, especially and precisely insofar as anthropomorphic presentations are dispensed with.²⁶ The Zen monk would further refuse to express this experience of "absolute reality" because he realizes that it is ineffable. Nor is this contrary to the practice of Christian mystics who also find it impossible to express God. Therefore, the Zen monk would discover

that what he had hitherto considered to be the Christian conception of God is different from the true Christian conception of God, and this could very well be reconciled with his own experience.²⁷

For Enomiya-Lassalle, then, satori is a "vision of essence" which involves an overcoming of dualism and of the subject-object tension in an experience of the unity of all in one in absolute being. In the same way, Christian enlightenment is an experience of unity. It differs from Zen enlightenment insofar as the Christian God is personal

²⁶Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, p. 85.

²⁷Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 78.

and the experience of God is complete only after the death of the Christian.²⁸

Graham, like Enomiya-Lassalle, points out that there is no reference to God in Buddhism, but that there is also no hint of "atheism."²⁹ "Zen," he says, "is an attitude of directness and simplicity, born of an awareness of one's own nature. It is matter of fact and down to earth."³⁰ The very hallmark of Zen is the "direct pointing"³¹ characteristic of satori. Satori is described by Graham as "the disappearance of the selfconscious me before the full realization of the unselfconscious I,"³² which "I" is not the "I" as seen by itself as "me" but rather the "I" which is included in "esse" or "isness."³³ This "submersion" of the "me" in "isness" which gives rise to the real "I" is not pantheistic. Graham quotes Suzuki to clarify this point: "Pantheism is apt to ignore differences, while Buddhism does not. Differences are differences and as such they remain."³⁴ Not can Zen be categorized as "mysticism" or "monism." Both of these terms are dualistic. The former is expressive of an "I-

²⁸Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, p. 92.

²⁹Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 14.

³⁰Ibid., p. 19. ³¹Ibid. ³²Ibid., p. 130.

³³Ibid., p. 131. ³⁴Ibid., p. 29.

"Thou" relationship, while the latter means that reality can be reduced to a basic oneness. Going beyond pantheism, mysticism, or monism, "Zen regards every aspect of reality as not one and not two, or more simply as non-dual."³⁵

Zen is the realization of this "non-duality." It is both the state of "non-duality" and the consciousness of this state which may be described as unselfconsciousness or the unfolding of the "I" or "true self" which is.

Graham maintains that any identification of this "I" or "true Self" with God is a gratuitous assumption. For in order to say that the "I" or "true self" is God one would have to be a "comprehender of God." Also, an identification of the "true self" and God assumes that there is no distinction between God and man and that there is not a relation of "dependent subordination of creature to Creator." Graham holds that this identification is incompatible with both Catholicism and Buddhism.³⁶ However, while there is no identity of the "true self" and God, there is an affinity between man's self and God.³⁷ This affinity is described by Graham, using the language and insight of Thomas Aquinas, as a "co-naturalness" of man and God which "co-naturalness" is not fully achieved before

³⁵Dom Aelred Graham, "Be an Instant Expert on Zen," The Critic (January-February 1972), p. 52.

³⁶Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 131.

³⁷Ibid., p. 28.

death.³⁸

Thus, for Graham, there is some parallel between Zen and Roman Catholicism in regard to the question of the one and the many. Zen satori is an experience of being or "isness" in which there is neither one nor many. The Catholic experience of God is such that while there is no identity of God and man, there is a co-naturalness of God and man.

Peter Kreeft discusses the question of the one and the many in the context of a discussion of the problem of monism (or nondualism) and pluralism (or dualism) which he sees as a central issue in the meeting between Zen and Christianity.³⁹ Kreeft discusses one aspect of this problem in terms of the relation between the God of Christianity and the Absolute in Zen. After recognizing the lack of a word such as God in Zen, he discusses whether God is objective or subjective reality, transcendent or immanent, personal or impersonal.

Christianity seems to suggest, according to Kreeft, that God is an objective "other," a "Thou," who or which exists independently. Zen, however, "seems to insist that the Absolute is a mode of human consciousness," a subjective reality.⁴⁰ However,

³⁸Ibid., p. 37.

³⁹Kreeft, p. 524ff.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 524-25.

though Christianity sees God as 'objective,' this means only 'independent'. . . . He is not an object in se but only quoad nos, only relative to our subjectivity (or rather, as our subjectivity is relative to him).⁴¹

On the other hand, Zen is usually interpreted as seeing the Absolute as subjectivity but the subjectivity is not in or relative to an ego-subject. Rather, "it is pure consciousness."⁴² Thus, God or the Absolute is neither objective nor subjective but transcends this discrimination of objective and subjective.

A second question, closely related to the first, is whether God is transcendent or immanent. Christianity seems to stress the former while Zen seems to put greater stress on the latter, i.e., on immanent Presence. After reducing this question to the problem of the infinite and the finite, Kreeft suggests that "Christianity is not dualism and Zen not monism, but both nondualism."⁴³ From a Catholic point of view, and grounded in Thomas Aquinas, Kreeft says that "if God is ipsum esse subsistens, that explains how he can be nearer to us than we are to ourselves."⁴⁴ Though he does not specifically quote Zen sources here or refer further to Zen, Kreeft does imply that for Zen the "immanent" Presence is grounded in transcendence. He writes: "Only a wholly transcendent infinite can include (identify with, account for, ground,

⁴¹Ibid., p. 525.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid, p. 527.

give rise to, give itself to) the whole of the finite."⁴⁵

A third problem that is discussed by Kreeft is whether God or the Absolute is personal or impersonal. Christianity seems to stress the former and Zen the latter. Kreeft attacks this problem by first making a distinction between "ego" and "person." In Zen "person" is equated with "ego." In Christianity "person" and "ego" are distinct. This distinction is apparent in the Christian belief in God as three persons rather than as three egos. Having made this distinction, Kreeft goes further and points out that God is not fundamentally "person" but rather "nature"--that is, God-head beyond the one-nature-three-person-God. While Zen may not affirm this, it does not contradict it.⁴⁶

Kreeft, finally, points out that both Zen and Christianity are centered in a nondualism. He writes:

The permeation of the whole of the Zen man's life by satori corresponds to the Christian 'practice of the presence of God'. . . . It does not objectify God (Who, being infinite, cannot be limited to one pole of any dualism, including the subject-object dualism) ⁴⁷

Kreeft applies this nondualism to the relation of all the opposites found in Christianity and in Zen.

In his book Concordant Discord, R. C. Zaehner attempts to evaluate the major religious traditions of the world in terms of a thesis he takes from St. Francis de

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 527.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 527-28

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 521.

Sales, that is, that there is achievement of unity in diversity and diversity in unity. He concludes that this thesis is most clearly approximated in the Roman Catholic Church. In the course of the book, he discusses Zen and finds it inadequate in regard to his thesis. He writes:

There is no doubt that Zen Buddhists today interpret the experience of Satori or enlightenment as the realization of the oneness of all things with oneself.⁴⁸

Thus, for Zaehner, Zen emphasizes one pole of the unity-diversity dialectic, the pole of unity or oneness, while Roman Catholicism embraces both poles. In doing this he strongly criticizes both Enomiya-Lassalle and Merton for their work in trying to close the gap between Zen and Catholicism without using the Hindu classic, the Bhagavad Gita as the bridge between the two traditions. Other than this, it is difficult to determine how he disagrees with Merton. Zaehner is more specific in regard to his disagreement with Enomiya-Lassalle. He wonders how Enomiya-Lassalle can speak of the Christian experience of God as simply semantically different from the Zen experience of oneness with nature and the universe. "What," he asks, "does Fr. Enomiya-Lassalle understand by God?"⁴⁹

Thomas Merton's approach to the theme of the one and the many is implicit in his discussion of the relation

⁴⁸Zaehner, Concordant Discord, p. 290.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 297-98.

between the God of Christianity and Zen "suchness." He makes it clear that "Zen does not deny the existence of a Supreme Being." He says:

It [Zen] neither affirms nor denies, it simply is. One might say that Zen is the ontological awareness of pure being beyond subject and object, an immediate grasp of being in its 'suchness' and 'thusness.'⁵⁰

Often the term "mind" is used to speak of "suchness." "Mind" does not refer to the foundation of our empirical consciousness nor to the "soul" as the "form of the body," nor to the intellectual faculty, as such. "Mind" refers to the so-called "ground" of our soul or "being in its suchness." In Zen the term "mind" is ontological.⁵¹ Yet, "mind" is your "everyday mind." The void or emptiness of prajna are "found" in the very midst of life. If it is not found there, it cannot be found anywhere because it is nowhere in the first place. Thus, in authentic Zen, one cannot get deluded or obsessed by "imagined spiritual states" which become "objects" to be possessed and finally turned into idols.⁵²

Merton attempts to relate "mind" which is Zen "suchness" to the Christian God. He criticizes the distinction between God and godhead, first as condemned by the Church, but more importantly, for our purposes, as

⁵⁰Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, pp. 13-14.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 16.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 33-34.

a clearly dualistic distinction. However, Merton, following Jan Ruysbroeck, finds an acceptable manner by which he can speak of godhead and "suchness." Merton suggests that the word "God" is used for our concepts of the essence and attributes of God while the word "godhead" refers to the ineffability of God which Ruysbroeck calls "essential nakedness." It is this "essential nakedness" which Merton perceives may correspond to Zen "emptiness" or "suchness" as spoken of by D. T. Suzuki.⁵³ Merton writes in a similar way a few years later when he implies that prajna or "mind" corresponds to God.⁵⁴ At the same time, Merton also warns us:

Zen is not concerned with God in the way Christianity is, though one is entitled to discover sophisticated analogies between the Zen experience of the Void (Sunyata) and the experience of God in the 'unknowing' of apophatic Christian mysticism.⁵⁵

From a Christian point of view, Merton finds great difficulty in relating the Zen experience of "sunyata" (emptiness, suchness, mind) to an "I-Thou" experience of God. He is very well aware that this type of union with God can involve one in the subject-object duality and he also wonders if this is the only way one can describe the

⁵³Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, pp. 135-36.

⁵⁴Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 27.

⁵⁵Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 35.

experience of God.⁵⁶

Merton developed this question toward the end of his life while commenting on Eckhart's teaching on creation. Speaking of Eckhart, Merton writes:

He admits the separation of the creature and Creator. . . . Yet the distinction between Creator and creature does not alter the fact that there is also a basic unity within ourselves at the summit of our being where we are 'one with God'. . . . This is all very close to the expressions we find everywhere in the Zen Masters. But it is also intended to be purely Christian.⁵⁷

It would seem that, in his later years, Merton was less quick to make analogies or to find correspondences between Zen sunyata and the Christian God. However, he does recognize that in Zen and in Christianity there is an attempt to transcend the subject-object duality in such a way that both oneness and manyness are preserved.

Following is a summary of the various positions that are taken by Roman Catholics in dialogue with Zen in regard to the question of the one and the many. According to Johnston and Kreeft, the basic issue in the meeting between Christianity and Zen is the problem of monism and dualism. Enomiya-Lassalle suggests that both Christian mystical experience and Zen enlightenment are experiences of absolute unity, the overcoming of the subject-object

⁵⁶Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, pp. 30-31, 242.

⁵⁷Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, pp. 11-12.

duality in an experience of oneness. The only difference lies in the Christian belief in a personal God. Both Johnston and Zaehner find that this belief gives rise to a simultaneous unity and diversity in Catholicism, whereas in Zen the "experience" is one of absolute unity. Graham has a different understanding of Zen. The Zen "experience" is not pantheistic, monist, or mystical. Rather, reality is "non-dual," that is, not one and not two.

Graham has no difficulty in finding the "not-two" in Catholicism. The "not-two" is described in terms of a co-naturalness between God and man, which co-naturalness is not totally fulfilled until death. Kreeft takes another step and argues that both Zen and Christianity express a "non-dualism." Merton suggests that both traditions transcend the subject-object duality. He relates the Christian belief in the ineffableness of God with the Zen awareness of suchness, of the everyday mind. However, he does find difficulty in discovering an I-Thou in Zen. There are three overall positions present in the above summary. Zen and Christianity are different insofar as Zen rests on unity while Catholicism accepts a unity and a diversity. Secondly, both Zen and Christianity are expressions of absolute unity. Finally, both Zen and Catholicism affirm a nondualism.

Zen Buddhism: One and Many

The second part of this chapter is a discussion of the theme of the one and the many according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu. It is while he discusses the Zen understanding of man that Hisamatsu enters into a discussion of oneness and manyness.⁵⁸ Man is characterized as ambiguous, that is, as simple and complex. In modern civilization, everything is becoming more complicated and hence there is a trend toward simplicity to counterbalance the complexity. Simplicity is oneness and complexity is manyness. To be one without also being many is to lack content. To be many without also being one is to be fragmented. Hisamatsu writes:

Oneness and manyness - or unity and diversity - are mutually indispensable moments within the basic structures of man. They must necessarily be one with each other and not two. Oneness without manyness is mere vacuity without content; manyness without oneness is mere segmentation without unity.⁵⁹

If man, and also if civilization, focuses on either the oneness (unity, simplicity) or the manyness (diversity, complexity), it is dis-eased. Both are absolutely fundamental for man. One without the other brings vacuousness or fragmentation. Since the contemporary issues are defined in terms of greater complexity (manness), there is

⁵⁸Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," pp. 39ff.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 41.

an attempt by many to enter a simpler life by merely withdrawing from the complexity. This, however, is a superficial solution. Hisamatsu mentions that this thrust toward simplicity is at the root of the contemporary desire to return to the primitive, which desire involves attempts to revitalize noncivilized cults and superstitions. He writes:

To turn from such superficial countermeasures to a genuine solution, there is no other way than by establishing within the multiplicity that oneness or unity which is appropriate to the multiplicity.⁶⁰

This oneness which is appropriate to the multiplicity cannot be a mere static foundation within multiplicity. "It must be a dynamic and creative oneness."⁶¹ It finds this dynamism in the manyness which is at its core. Hisamatsu says:

The true oneness is a oneness in manyness; the true manyness is a manyness in oneness.⁶²

Hisamatsu holds to both oneness and manyness as basically constitutive of man and of civilization. The question arises as to the inner relation of oneness and manyness, as well as the question of the uniqueness of oneness and manyness.

The basis of all reality, which is a bottomless depth, according to Hisamatsu, is "Absolutely One."⁶³

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 41-42. ⁶¹Ibid., p. 42. ⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, Zen and the Fine Arts, trans. Gishin Tokiwa (Palo Alto, Calif.: Kodansha International Ltd., 1971), p. 52.

This One is the root source of the Many which are the particular and the differentiated. The direction here is from the One to the Many, which Many return to the One.

The One is also called the formless and the Many is called the form. Thus, Hisamatsu writes:

It is not that the many expresses itself in the many, or form in form; rather, the One expresses itself in the many, and the Formless in form. Accordingly, even the many that is expressed is not meant to express the many, nor is the form expressed intended to express form. On the contrary, the many is intended to express the One, and form, Formlessness.⁶⁴

This statement may seem to reduce the many to the one so that one and many are not two but one. But Hisamatsu recognizes the inevitability of plurality, that is, of manyness. The One itself is expressed or is active in being Many. The Many, while arising from the One, is such that the One would not really be One without expressing itself as Many. The Many is just as much an inner moment of the One as the One is essential for the Many. Hisamatsu writes:

By penetrating into the bottomless depth of the phenomenal world, man can be free from plurality and difference, and can actually attain the immanent 'noumenon' that is absolutely One and equal. Here man is free from plurality; he is plural without ceasing to be One. In being One, man is the Formless Fundamental Subject that is beyond every limitation and characterization. In being plural, he is the Active Fundamental Subject that is not confined even to the One. Plurality is the One; the One is plurality.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 21.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 53.

Thus, for Hisamatsu, Oneness would not be the Formless Fundamental Subject unless it 'contained' the Many. If the Many were excluded there would simply be Oneness insofar as it is the opposite of Many. Also, Oneness which is the Fundamental Subject would not be fundamental unless the Many were an inner moment of the One. Oneness without Manyness is not fundamentally Oneness nor is Manyness without Oneness fundamentally Manyness.

What is being expressed here (the very fact of expression is an intrinsic element of the problem itself) may be more "clearly" seen from Hisamatsu's discussion of Zen as the "Self-Awareness of the Formless Self."⁶⁶ Following is an attempt to summarize his argument.

What is the "Formless Self?" Zen "formlessness" means a lack of form of any kind, either physical or mental. The lack of physical form is the most obvious kind of formlessness. Zen includes this but also goes further. The mind may be considered as formless, yet it cannot be said that it lacks all form since ideas, which in themselves can be defined, by that very fact have form. The question at this point is: Is there any mental activity or any mind which transcends definition or goes beyond ideas that are definable?

Hisamatsu suggests that there is such a mind. It is called "self-consciousness" or "self." He writes:

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 45.

When self-consciousness is treated objectively . . . that which becomes the object of study can no longer be self-consciousness; rather, that which entertains the object of study as object is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is that which never becomes an object, but which at all times on all occasions remains the subject. Otherwise it would not be self-consciousness.⁶⁷

When an attempt is made to define selfconsciousness, it is placed outside the self, as it were. But there is still the self which tries to define. No matter how hard one tries to objectify or to study that "self," that "self" which is studied is still that which is studying. It cannot be completely objectified. It is in this way that the mind which goes beyond definition is called self-consciousness. It is also called pure mind.

This selfconsciousness is not totally formless. For while selfconsciousness in itself is unlimited and nondefinable, one formless selfconsciousness (I) stands opposite another selfconsciousness (a different I). Each I (formless selfconsciousness) is different from an other I. There are many people in the world. Thus, while the individual selfconsciousness is formless, there is a differentiation of "it" in respect to an other individual selfconsciousness. This differentiation means that the individual formless self is not totally formless because it has form in relation to an other individual formless self. Zen formlessness goes beyond the individual form-

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 46.

less self. Hisamatsu concludes:

Formlessness in Zen is not the concept of being formless, but rather the reality of the Self that is formless. It is this True or Formless Self that we call Zen.⁶⁸

Satori is the awakening to the Formless Self. This awakening is not simply a coming to consciousness but is being the Formless Self. This self-awareness which is being the self that is aware or being the Self-awareness is satori. The one who awakens to the Formless Self and that which is awakened are one and not two. Hisamatsu has expressed this Self which is Self-aware as the "Fundamental Subject that is Absolutely Nothing."⁶⁹ This Nothing is not a negation but is rather the No of the Self of No Form.

The Formless Self, being Self without form, is not static but active. To consider the Formless Self as inactive is to miss the basic thrust of Formlessness. If Formlessness equals inactivity, then we are caught within another discrimination, that between static and dynamic. Then Formlessness would not be true Formlessness. Thus, "the Fundamental Subject that is Absolutely Nothing is also the Fundamental Subject that is Actively Nothing."⁷⁰

There is the Fundamental Subject or Self which in itself is active and there is the Self that arises from this activity. Formlessness comes, through this activity,

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 48.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 50.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 51.

to be form. "This form that constitutes the activity of the Formless Self, however, is the form of No Form.:⁷¹ This form, which is No Form, is called, in Zen, "wondrous being."

The "Self-Awareness of the Formless Self," as an awakening, has two aspects: the awakening to the Formless Self and the activity of the Formless Self giving rise to the Form of No Form.

In the terminology of the one and the many, "one" corresponds to the Formless Self or the Fundamental Subject which is Absolutely Nothing. "Many" corresponds to the Fundamental Subject that is Actively Nothing or the Form that is No Form. "In being One man is the Formless Fundamental Subject that is beyond every limitation and characterization. In being plural, he is the Active Fundamental Subject that is not confined even to the One."⁷² Thus, the Many is the One and the One is the Many.

The question of the one and the many is expressed in the writings of D. T. Suzuki in different ways and with reference to different themes, e.g., knowledge, love, nature, satori, creation, monotheism, and polytheism. In the following pages, each of these themes will be discussed separately. The cumulative effect of this discussion will be a revealing of Suzuki's approach to the one and the

⁷¹Ibid., p. 51.

⁷²Ibid., p. 53.

many.

The first theme to be discussed is the relation between man and nature. Some commentators on Zen and its relation to nature speak of an identification between man and nature.⁷³ What they say has some truth to it from the standpoint of Zen. For example, most people do not know how to look at a flower or even at a mountain. They look at them. They are at a distance from them. There is a gap between the flower and the observer. In fact, being an observer is precisely the problem. However, the observer and the flower come from the same root. If this root is realized, then the flower can be really appreciated from within. The gap is closed. But to close the gap is not merely an identification of the flower and the observer. Suzuki writes:

Here we must remember that the experience of mere oneness is not enough for the real appreciation of Nature. . . . The feeling of love is possible in a world of multiplicity. . . . The balancing of unity and multiplicity . . . is absolutely necessary to the aesthetic understanding of nature.⁷⁴

Nor is tranquillity or serenity characteristic of a Zen attitude toward nature. Zen takes hold "of life in its wholeness." It "moves 'restlessly' with it or stays quietly with it."⁷⁵

⁷³Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 355.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 354.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 356.

Zen, according to Suzuki, is not simply identified with oneness or serenity nor is Zen identified with multiplicity or restlessness, nor is Zen mere identification of man and nature. Suzuki says that "transparency is the keynote to the Zen understanding of Nature, and it is from this that its love of Nature starts."⁷⁶ In other words, Zen grasps nature in its oneness and in its manyness, in its tranquillity, and in its restlessness. All is transparent.

This transparency in Zen may become "more clear" in a discussion of Suzuki's approach to Zen epistemology. Zen does not wish to have any dealings with mediums in perception. Suzuki says that Zen "advises its followers to have direct dealings with their objects, whatever they may be."⁷⁷ In another place, he writes: "Zen must be seized with bare hands, with no gloves on."⁷⁸ Thus, mediumless perception is unlike ordinary dualistic perception in which there is a split between the knower and the known. In ordinary perception, the intellect divides reality into an inside and an outside, into subjective and objective reality.⁷⁹ Suzuki writes:

To conceive the truth as something external which is to be perceived by a perceiving subject is

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 357.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 359.

⁷⁸Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 51.

⁷⁹Suzuki, The Field of Zen, pp. 52-53.

dualistic and appeals to the intellect for its understanding, but according to Zen we are living right in the truth, by the truth, from which we cannot be separated.⁸⁰

Two ways of knowing are presented here. First, there is the knowing in which subject and object are divided, the knowing logically or with a medium. The second kind of knowing is a direct knowledge. There is no medium and hence no duality involved. To say there is no medium does not imply there is an identification of subject and object. To say there is no duality does not imply oneness.

Suzuki also makes a distinction between an intuitive way of knowing (prajna) and a discursive way of knowing (vijnana). Prajna grasps reality in its oneness. Vijnana grasps life in its manyness, that is, it analyzes it into subject and object. Zen does not remain in the oneness or can it be equated with the subject-object duality. Suzuki writes:

The oneness dividing itself into subject-object and yet retaining its oneness at the very moment that there is the awakening of a consciousness--this is satori.⁸¹

This description of satori, according to Suzuki, points to Zen's affirmation of oneness and recognition of manyness. Suzuki makes this clear while speaking of the intellect and the divisions of subject-object and inside-outside.

⁸⁰ Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 126.

⁸¹ Suzuki, The Field of Zen, pp. 52-

He writes:

The two must be merged into one another while remaining two.⁸²

Here there is an affirmation of both one and many. Thus mediumless perception or a direct grasping of life is not a mere oneness but rather a oneness which still remains two or many. At times Suzuki calls this an "absolute oneness."⁸³

The question of the one and the many is also discussed by Suzuki in terms of knowledge (prajna) and love (karuna). Prajna may be generally translated as intuition or wisdom. Karuna may be translated as compassion or love. It corresponds more to love as agape than to love as eros.⁸⁴ In relation to prajna and karuna in respect to each other and in regard to the categories of one and many, Suzuki writes:

Zen is liable to emphasize Prajna and the Karuna side is apt to be neglected but in fact Karuna and Prajna are two aspects of Reality and the one complements the other. Without Prajna there will be no Karuna and without Karuna, no Prajna; so where-ever there is one there ought to be the other. . . . Prajna is static whereas Karuna is dynamic; one is being, the other is becoming, so being and becoming go together, whereas in thought we divide them. . . . Buddhism talks about Sunyata, and Sunyata is emptiness, the object of Prajna; Karuna corresponds to this world of multi-

⁸²Ibid., p. 53.

⁸³Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 113.

⁸⁴Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 43.

tudes. So Prajna is the oneness of things and Karuna is the many-ness of things.⁸⁵

The oneness of which Suzuki speaks here is not a relative oneness but rather the "Absolute One"⁸⁶ which contains all relativity while remaining absolute. It is this Absolute One which is the "object" of prajna. Karuna, insofar as it corresponds to this "world of multitudes is not merely something extracted from life." It is the "way we live the life of activity."⁸⁷ Suzuki points out that karuna is of the essence of satori. He writes:

Enlightenment is the wish to communicate, that is, love itself. The very idea of wishing to transmit makes Prajna, Karuna. They must complement each other.⁸⁸

For Suzuki, Zen is not merely one nor many, but both one and many.

The final aspect of Suzuki's writing to be discussed in regard to the one and the many is his thought on God in regard to creation and in regard to monotheism and pantheism.

According to Suzuki, a great problem exists when we merely say that God created the world. In order to create the world God had to distinguish between Himself and the world. But if a creating God is such that he is outside the world or is separate from the world, then he is

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 38.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 39.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 41.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 55.

no God. For God, to be God, must be in the world. Also, the world is not the world when it is separate from God. This is the problem. If God is simply outside the world or other than the world, He is not God. But also, if God is merely in the world, He is not God. There is a similar dilemma in regard to the world. If the world is other than God it is not the world, and if the world is in God it is not the world. Suzuki sums this up when he says:

There is God and there is the world, but there is also something which runs from one to the other. . . . There is constant communion and at the same time constant differentiation. There are two things, and at the same time one thing. Two are not two, two are one, one is two.⁸⁹

Suzuki also discusses this issue in terms of monotheism and pantheism. When it is heard that in Zen the One is the All and the All is the One, Zen may be perceived as pantheism. According to Suzuki, Zen is not pantheistic. He writes:

Zen is neither monotheistic nor pantheistic. . . . If Zen is monotheism, it may tell its followers to meditate on the oneness of things where all differences and inequalities . . . are obliterated. If Zen were pantheistic it would tell us that every meanest flower in the field reflects the glory of God. But what Zen says is "After things are reduced to oneness, where would that One be reduced?" Zen wants to have one's mind free and unobstructed; even the idea of oneness and allness is a stumbling block and a strangling snare which threatens the original freedom of the spirit.⁹⁰

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 16.

⁹⁰Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 41.

Zen is not pantheism insofar as it does not focus on differences (manyness) nor is Zen monotheism insofar as it does not center on oneness.

Suzuki's discussion of the one and the many can be summed up in the following quote:

The phrase "One in All and All in One" is to be understood as an expression of absolute prajna intuition and is not to be conceptually analyzed. . . . To Zen students, the One is the All and the All is the One; and yet the One remains the One and the All the All. "Not two!" may lead the logician to think, "It is one." But the Master would go on saying, "Not one either!"⁹¹

It may be said that, for Suzuki, the question of the one and the many leads us to the very heart of Zen where there is the One and there are the Many, yet where the very conceptualization of one and many is transcended or rather grasped directly with "bare hands."

Thus, Suzuki and Hisamatsu, through different approaches, give expression to Zen as expressing both the oneness and the manyness of Reality.

Karl Rahner: One and Many

Louis Roberts, in his introduction to the theology of Karl Rahner, says that "a philosophical paradigm of the one in the many and the many in the one models Rahner's hermeneutics."⁹² The following pages illustrate this

⁹¹Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 32.

⁹²Louis Roberts, The Achievement of Karl Rahner (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 8.

paradigm in terms of Rahner's theology. The purpose of this section is to show how the one is related to the many and the many is related to the one in the light of the theology of a Catholic theologian. It is by no means an attempt to present an adequate summary of Rahner's metaphysics of knowledge which contains the philosophical foundation for Rahner's theology. The question of the one and the many is exemplified in many specific topics that are treated by Rahner. These topics are touched on insofar as they elucidate the paradigm of the one and the many.

In a discussion of the theology of the symbol, Rahner enters on an extensive discussion of the relationship between unity and multiplicity. The basic principle which he attempts to develop is that "all beings are by their nature symbolic, because they necessarily 'express' themselves in order to attain their own nature."⁹³ Insofar as his inquiry is theological, it must be remembered that a theology of the Trinity is always in the background. This is evident in the starting-point of his explanation of the basic principle quoted above. Thus, Rahner says that insofar as a being is finite, it is multiple. But, as Rahner is quick to point out, the multiplicity of finite being is not a merely negative qualification (It is here that the Trinity enters the discussion. For a "divine

⁹³Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, trans. Keven Smyth (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), p. 224.

plurality" does not imply limitation, imperfection, or weakness but rather a supreme fullness of unity.).⁹⁴ The plurality of a being stems from an original unity and is, in fact, necessary for the very perfection of that unity. Rahner writes:

Being as such, and hence as one (ens as unum), for the fulfillment of its being and its unity, emerges into a plurality.⁹⁵

In order that unity be unity it must "blossom" into plurality, which plurality is related to the unity not merely in terms of efficient causality⁹⁶ but in a relationship of "origin and consequence."⁹⁷ Rahner writes:

Each being bears within itself an intrinsic plurality, without detriment to its unity and perfection--which may eventually be supreme--precisely as the perfection of its unity.⁹⁸

The one is really one only insofar as it is many. The many is many not simply in terms of a juxtaposition of each element but insofar as each element in the many is intrinsically related to every other element in their source which is one. Thus, manyness is not merely different unrelated elements but a manyness in which there is a fundamental oneness. This is true of being qua being and thus Rahner sees an ontological basis for the inner relation of one and many.

Rahner also discusses the question of the one and

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 226-27.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 228.

⁹⁶Ibid. ⁹⁷Ibid., p. 227.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 235.

the many in the context of his reflections on creation, the Church, and the plurality of science. While speaking of creation, Rahner suggests that the plurality of the world is the creation of one and the same God. The variety and difference in creation is not expressive of essential differences nor contradictions, but rather forms a unity in its "origin, self-realization and determination."⁹⁹ Thus, there is "one world." The origin is one and the creation, while diverse, is also one.¹⁰⁰ The Church also is described as one. Her unity is "one in which the greatest possible diversity and multiplicity of individuals, peoples and cultures live and more."¹⁰¹ While speaking of the relation between philosophy and theology, Roberts points out that Rahner sees the plurality of sciences as originating from one common ground. Rahner reduces this question to a more fundamental question about man.¹⁰² It is this question of the unity and duality of man that is discussed in the remainder of this section.

Rahner's approach to the question of man manifests his appreciation of a profound ambiguity in man. On the

⁹⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 161.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, trans. David Bourke (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), p. 75.

¹⁰²Roberts, The Achievement of Karl Rahner, p. 38.

one hand Rahner says that "man has an infinitely profound yearning for unity,"¹⁰³ while on the other he speaks of man's condition as one of "eternal duality."¹⁰⁴

Whenever Rahner speaks of man ontically, that is, in regard to his factual condition, he describes this condition as dual. The duality is expressed in the dichotomies between spirit and matter, freedom and bondage, individual and society. This ontic dualism will not be reduced to a unity but is permanent.¹⁰⁵ The ontic dualism also is manifest in Rahner's discussion of concupiscence which he defines theologically as a dualism between person and nature. What he means here by the duality of person and nature is expressed in the following quote:

Concupiscence consists essentially in the fact that man in this regime does not overcome even by his free decision the dualism between what he is as nature prior to his existential decision and what he becomes as person by this decision, not even in the measure in which it would absolutely speaking be conceivable for a finite spirit to overcome it. Man never becomes wholly absorbed either in good or evil.¹⁰⁶

The dualism is also described in Rahner's discussion of the "ideal" of German mysticism. This "ideal" is described as the man "of the heart" or the "collected

¹⁰³Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, trans. David Bourke (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), p. 15.

¹⁰⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, p. 399.

¹⁰⁶Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), p. 369.

man."¹⁰⁷ For Rahner, the "heart" is the "center, basis, origin and original unity prior to all multiplicity, which provides all existence with its goal, and constitutes a mutual interrelationship between all beings."¹⁰⁸ The man "of the heart" is the "collected man," that is, the man whose every activity,

whose whole activity is an expression of his innermost centre and his innermost vital decision, and who therefore remains 'collected' in this innermost centre without being dispersed in anything alien to this decision.¹⁰⁹

Concupiscence, in this context, is the fact that "man never wholly possesses this collected heartfelt inwardness of his whole life in the ultimate deed of his inmost being."¹¹⁰ For Rahner the factual situation of man is a permanent condition of duality grounded in an original unity. The condition of duality is spoken of in terms of plurality or manyness. Rahner writes:

. . . there is an intrinsic plurality in man's nature, a plurality such that he must not for one moment attempt to impose unity upon it, or produce an integral synthesis in it by his own powers.¹¹¹

There is a temptation in man to impose a unity upon his

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 374.

¹⁰⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, p. 236.

¹⁰⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, p. 374.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, pp. 16-17.

nature, for man, as mentioned above, has a profound yearning for unity. After mentioning this yearning, Rahner immediately gives expression to this temptation. He writes:

This [the yearning for unity] is why he is always in danger of oversimplifying, in danger of wanting to design everything in his life from one single angle and of wanting to determine everything as a function of one single, definite entity which is familiar to him and controllable by him.¹¹²

Rahner does not only recognize a danger in the yearning for unity but also points out that unity is constitutive of man. While speaking of the Christian belief that all things are the creation of one and the same God, Rahner writes:

This does not simply mean that everything stems from one cause, which - since [it is] infinite and omnipotent - can create the most varied things. It means also that this variety shows an inner similarity and community: that the contents of this variety must not be simply regarded as essentially different or even contradictory but rather that this variety and difference be seen to form a unity in origin, self-realization and determination, in short: one world.¹¹³

Rahner also speaks of a unity in man himself. After pointing out that Christian philosophy and theology do recognize the unity and wholeness of man, he says that man is one in an objective order. He writes:

¹¹²Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, p. 3.

¹¹³Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, p. 161.

. . . . man, that is to say that objective entity with which each of us is directly confronted as a matter of his own personal experience, is originally one, one with a unity which is not the mere outcome or result of a chance combination of two prior entities. It follows from this that what we experience as soul is in reality our own being which is objectively speaking a single and whole entity as viewed from within. And what we call our body is ultimately this same entity in its oneness and wholeness as experienced from without.¹¹⁴

Although man consists of body and soul--a distinction which cannot be obliterated--he also is one. This oneness is evident in an encounter between man and man. In the encounter man does not meet a separate soul or separate body, but rather a man in his oneness. Man is simultaneously one and many. The oneness of man is not his own. Rahner says that "God alone remains the one true unity in the plurality which is in man."¹¹⁵ Man, however, stands in a relationship to God such that he is not God. This statement has two implications. First, man cannot be all in one or he would be God. Secondly, even though man is complex or multiple, Rahner says that:

. . . . he cannot withhold himself from constantly striving anew to achieve a unity in the midst of this complexity, and from actually attaining to the unity for which he strives (for otherwise he would not be the spiritual being who stands in a special relationship to God in his uniqueness).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, p. 276.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 18.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 217.

For Rahner, man is one and many. His oneness is ultimately grounded in God who is the "antecedent ground of the possibility of this unity" and hence is "anterior to the duality of subject and object."¹¹⁷ God is the center which is spoken of as the "heart," that is, the "original unity prior to all multiplicity"¹¹⁸ from which center or heart the multiplicity of human reality flows and to which it returns. Man is essentially complex. But the manyness of his complexity flows from a unity which is the very condition for its possibility. The goal of man's striving must reach its term. Yet, in reaching this term, man returns again to multiplicity which is the very perfection of the unity.¹¹⁹

The philosophical basis for Rahner's approach to man is explicated in his book Spirit in the World. The concern of this book is a development of a metaphysics of knowledge. Without going into the detail of Rahner's argument, aspects of it which refer to the question of the one and the many are presented below.

The title of this book, Spirit in the World, is expressive of the ambivalence of man, that is, his multi-

¹¹⁷Karl Rahner, Hominisation: The Evolutionary Origin of Man as a Theological Problem, trans. W. T. O'Hara (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958), pp. 50-51.

¹¹⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, p. 236.

¹¹⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, p. 235.

plicity and his thrust toward unity. This ambivalence is manifest in his knowing. In knowing, man is at once one with that which is known (sensibility) and yet other than that which is known (abstraction). Yet, essentially it is one who knows, that is, the knowledge itself is one in its very unity and multiplicity (conversion to the phantasm).¹²⁰

The ambivalence of man is evident for Rahner in the very structure of man himself. Man knows the world and in knowing the world and himself, man and the world are placed into question in such a way that the question reaches back to the absolute ground, to Being itself.¹²¹ To make this clearer, it must be understood that for Rahner a basic assumption concerning man is that man questions.¹²² This is the only must, the "only thing beyond question to which questioning man is bound, the only circle in which his questioning is caught."¹²³

However, it is not any question that is the must. For man can turn away from some questions, that is, not ask them. But there is one question from which he cannot turn away. This is the question about being which man "must ask if he wants to be at all."¹²⁴ Man is insofar

¹²⁰Karl Rahner, Spirit in the World, trans. William Dych (New York: Herder and Herder, 1957), p. 77.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 407.

¹²²Ibid., p. 57.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 58.

as he asks about being in its totality. "Man exists as the question about being."¹²⁵ But man exists in the world and he "is in the presence of being in its totality insofar as he finds himself in the world."¹²⁶

To ask any question implies that I know, in some way, something about the response, that is, if being is questioned, it must in some way "already" be known. Thus, when man questions being in its totality, he is in some sense already at the goal. But by the very fact that the question is asked, man confesses that he is not at the goal. Rahner writes:

In so far as we can ask about the world known by man, the world and man asking are already placed in question all the way back to their absolute ground, to a ground which always lies beyond the boundaries within man's grasp, beyond the world. Thus every venture into the world shows itself to be borne by the ultimate desire of the spirit for absolute being; every entrance into sensibility, into the world and its destiny, shows itself to be only the coming to be of a spirit which is striving towards the absolute. Thus man is the mid-point suspended between the world and God, between time and eternity, and this boundary line is the point of his definition and his destiny.¹²⁷

It is insofar as man asks the question about being in its totality that he reaches beyond himself, that he is spirit. He asks insofar as he is in the world. Thus man, as spirit in the world, is man--always exiled in the world and always beyond it.¹²⁸ He is in touch with the universal

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 62.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 407.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 406.

(being in its totality) and the universal as it is in the particular. Man does not merely know universals but also knows a particular "this" or "that."

It is in the context of Rahner's discussion of symbol, the Church, the unity and plurality of the sciences, the ambiguity of man, the relationship between creatures and Creator, and his metaphysics of knowledge that he affirms oneness and manyness as intrinsically related, constitutive elements of reality.

Conclusion

The Roman Catholic authors who deal with the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism reduce many of the issues that they discuss to the question of the one and the many. These authors then interpret the question of the one and the many in various ways.

William Johnston sees both traditions as "moving down" into the core of being. However, the experience and articulation of this core are different for Zen and for Catholicism according to Johnston. He maintains that in Zen the focus is upon a unity or oneness which rejects all dualism. The oneness is an absolute unity which is also spoken of as "is-ness." In Roman Catholicism the core is experienced and interpreted by Johnston as both one and many. Hugo Enomiya-Lassalle differs from Johnston. He sees the essence of both Roman Catholicism and Zen to be in an experience of oneness. In Zen, according to Enomiya-Lassalle,

the oneness is the unity of all being. In Roman Catholicism it is a oneness with God. While both traditions give expression to an experience of perfect unity, they differ insofar as the Zen experience can be actualized in this life while the Christian enlightenment can be experienced fully only in the Beatific Vision. A second difference is that in Roman Catholicism the enlightenment involves a personal God. Dom Aelred Graham, finally, finds both oneness and manyness in both Roman Catholicism and Zen. In both traditions, reality is not one and not two. The difference is that in Roman Catholicism the "not-twoness" of the relation between God and the human is not realized until after death. These three positions sum up the approaches of all the Roman Catholics treated in the first part of this chapter. While the other Catholic authors discussed present different developments, their conclusions are fundamentally similar to one or another of the three positions outlined above.

Suzuki and Hisamatsu articulate the foundation of Zen in terms of oneness and manyness. Both speak of Zen as absolutely one. Johnston also uses this language in reference to Zen which he sees as realizing the core of being which is absolute unity. However, Johnston's understanding of this absolute unity is different from the understanding of Suzuki and Hisamatsu. For Johnston it means the overcoming of all duality. This overcoming

would exclude manyness or the "10,000 things." Suzuki, however, says that in Zen satori there is a realization of oneness which divides itself into subject and object (manness) while retaining the unity. For Hisamatsu reality is absolutely one(formless). But this oneness is expressed in form (manness) which form is essential to the oneness. Thus, Hisamatsu attempts to articulate the basis of reality in such a way that all duality is transcended, even the duality of one and many or duality and nonduality. To put this in another way: oneness and manyness are mutually indispensable moments in the basic structure of reality. The approaches of Enomiya-Lassalle and Johnston to Zen are different from the approaches of Suzuki and Hisamatsu. The approaches of Graham and Merton are, at least, linguistically similar to Hisamatsu and Suzuki. Both oneness and manyness are affirmed by Rahner. The final part of this chapter is a lengthy articulation of a question which may extend the Zen-Catholic dialogue in the light of the Zen of Hisamatsu and the Catholicism of Rahner.

Both Rahner and Hisamatsu describe the existential condition of the human as ambiguous. For Hisamatsu the ambiguity is found in the simplicity and complexity of the human where simplicity is equivalent to unity or oneness and complexity is expressive of diversity or manyness. Rahner sees the human ontical condition as one of duality--

which duality is permanently present along with a profound yearning for unity. It would seem at this point that the ambiguity is "real" for Hisamatsu, that is, that the human is both one and many while, for Rahner, the ambiguity is not as sharply defined insofar as the human is "really" caught up in duality with a mere yearning for unity. However, for Rahner, the human is one in origin, self-realization, and determination. The human yearning for oneness arises from who the human is, which is also who the human is becoming. The duality of the human has as the very condition of its possibility a unity or oneness which Rahner grounds in God. Thus, for both Rahner and Hisamatsu oneness and manyness are inner moments of the structure of the human. This can also be shown insofar as both are aware of the danger of over-simplifying, that is, of focusing on unity. For Hisamatsu oneness without manyness would lack content. For Rahner, it would mean wanting to reduce life to one single entity. But the question still remains: Is the oneness of Rahner the same as that of Hisamatsu? Is the manyness of Rahner the same as that of Hisamatsu?

For Hisamatsu, Zen actualizes the "self-awareness of the Formless Self." The Self here is not merely the psychological self nor is it the self which is in relation to other selves. Rather the Self is that which never becomes merely an object. The Self in Zen is "formless."

In Zen, the one who realizes this Formless Self is called a "man of no title." The condition is one of absolute subjectivity. It is absolutely nothing which is oneness. But to stop here would be to remain in a duality, that between a static oneness and manyness. For Hisamatsu the Fundamental Subject which is absolutely nothing is also actively nothing. Formlessness, in being truly formless, "gives rise" to form. Oneness "gives rise" to manyness or the form of no form. Or, in other words, manyness arises from oneness in such a way that oneness remains one in the manyness and manyness remains many even though it is grounded in oneness.

For Rahner, all beings are necessarily one and many. He starts from the "evident" multiplicity of finite beings but is quick to point out that the plurality of being stems from an original unity. Is this original unity correspondent to Hisamatsu's "absolute nothing"? It would seem, at least, that there is a fundamental similarity, for the original unity of Rahner is necessarily symbolic, that is, it necessarily expresses itself (the activity of the Formlessness of Hisamatsu) to be itself. Being, for the very fulfillment of itself, for its unity, emerges into a plurality.

Thus, it could be concluded that for both Rahner and Hisamatsu, oneness and manyness are inner moments of each other. This means that for Rahner and for Hisamatsu,

the ground of Christianity and for Zen can be seen as fundamentally similar. In Zen this ground can be called the realization of the "Self-awareness of the Formless Self," or the Buddha-Nature. In Christianity, the ground is God who is the original unity, which necessarily expresses itself, which is realized in Christian faith. These grounds are not simply dualistic or nondualistic. Rather, they are not one and not two, that is, both one and many. Thus, Zen enlightenment is not simply nondualistic, and Christian faith is not simply dualistic. Rather, both enlightenment and faith are "realizations" that are dual and nondual.

However, if one considers the ontological grounds of Zen and Catholicism, the above conclusion that these grounds are similar would be seen to be precipitous. According to both Hisamatsu and Suzuki, the fundamental realization of Zen is the realization of Absolute Oneness, which is precisely Oriental Nothingness, Nothingness beyond the duality of being and nonbeing. In classical Thomistic philosophic-theology, God is the ground of Catholicism and God is Subsistent Being. God is then One insofar as Oneness is a transcendental quality of Being. A fundamental difference between Zen and Catholicism would seem to be emerging here. The ground of Zen is the Oneness which is Nothingness which is beyond the distinction between being and nonbeing. The ground of Catholicism is the One God who is Being and whose Being is opposed to nonbeing. In the

final chapter, it will be pointed out that the Catholics who have encountered Zen have not faced this difference. A few anticipatory remarks, however, are in order.

It was seen above that the theme of the one and the many is a central theme in the encounter between Catholics and Zen Buddhists. The Catholic authors who have encountered Zen have also perceived that enlightenment is central to Zen. However, the way that they understand enlightenment must be called into question in the light of the Zen of Hisamatsu and Suzuki. These Catholic authors, who affirm the fundamental experience of Catholicism to be that of God who is Being, then understand Zen enlightenment in terms of an experience of Being.

According to Johnston, Zen and Catholicism are different insofar as Catholicism affirms both the one and the many while Zen affirms absolute Oneness. A further difference between Zen and Catholicism is implied in the writings of Johnston. He describes Christian mysticism as the experience of God who is the ground of Being, and identifies God with Being. He then applies this category in the meeting between Christians and Buddhists when he says that Christians and Buddhists meet in the experience of the ground of the soul where "Being is." Johnston further affirms that this is the core reality of Zen when he points out that Zen is and that enlightenment is a pure experience of "isness."

At a few places, Johnston gives expression to an awareness of the Zen "void." However, in an attempt to draw the Zen experience closer to his Christian experience, he reduces the "void" to an apparent reality, albeit, a rich emptiness. This is obviously different from the Zen of Hisamatsu and Suzuki. According to these men, Nothingness or sunyata (or void) is fundamental in Zen, not as apparent reality but as ultimate reality. Furthermore, there is a fundamental duality in Johnston's approach to ultimate reality, a duality which is not present in Zen, that is, in Zen, "To be is not to be," while Johnston affirms the absoluteness of "to be." Thus, not only is there a difference between Johnston's approach to Catholicism and Zen in terms of the relationship between the one and the many but a more fundamental difference insofar as Johnston grounds Catholicism in Being which is opposed to nonbeing, and affirms that this is also the ground of Zen. On the other hand, for Suzuki and Hisamatsu, absolute reality is Oriental Nothingness or Nonbeing which is beyond the duality of being and nonbeing.

Enomiya-Lasalle differs from Johnston when he affirms that the Christian mystical experience and Zen enlightenment are experiences of absolute and perfect unity. The Christian mystic, while realizing that the perfect unity is not achieved during this life, does affirm that the "goal" of mysticism is the realization of this absolute

oneness with God who is absolute being. Enomiya-Lassalle then argues that ultimately Zen enlightenment is a passage through nothingness to absolute being and, hence, that there is a correspondence between Christian mysticism and Zen enlightenment insofar as both are experiences of absolute Being. This, however, differs from the Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu for whom the Zen realization of Nothingness is beyond being and nonbeing. Enomiya-Lassalle's understanding of Zen nothingness is limited insofar as he perceives that Zen "nothingness" is transcended to reach the realm of perfect Being. Thus, like Johnston, Enomiya-Lassalle misses the mark because of his misunderstanding of Zen enlightenment as it is understood by Suzuki and Hisamatsu.

The same critique may be made of Graham. As with Johnston and Enomiya-Lassalle, he affirms the accepted Thomistic teaching of God as Being and then describes the fundamental Zen realization in terms of the realization of Being.

The approach of Merton is more subtle than that of the previously mentioned three authors. At some points Merton recognizes an identity between the pure void of Zen and pure being. He does not, however, pursue this identification but equates Zen with "Being's awareness of itself in us" and finds that there is some correspondence between this awareness and the experience of union with God which

involves a metaphysical intuition of Being beyond subject and object. Thus, Merton also misses the fundamental ground of Zen as it is understood by Hisamatsu and Suzuki as "Nonbeing," which is beyond the distinction between being and nonbeing.

Thus, each of the major authors who have confronted Zen from the point of view of Catholicism give expression to the Christian mystical experience in terms of the experience of God as Absolute or Subsistent Being. This affirmation is, generally, in accord with the Thomistic affirmation of God as Being. On the other hand, these authors describe the Zen realization to be a realization of Being and in doing so do not confront what, according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu, is fundamental to Zen, that is, Oriental Nothingness. Therefore, it is to be concluded that, even though each of these Catholic authors is quite sympathetic toward Zen, not one of them meets Zen on its own ground as expressed by Suzuki and Hisamatsu, that is, Nonbeing. If the encounter is to proceed further there must, then, be a reexamination of the fundamental categories of Catholicism as expressed in Thomistic tradition and a serious consideration given to Oriental Nothingness. This conclusion will be reaffirmed in the following chapters, which discuss various issues which have arisen in the encounter between Zen and Catholicism.

CHAPTER III

THE TRINITY

The present chapter of this dissertation is a presentation of how the Christian belief in the Trinity is involved in the dialogue between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism. Included in the chapter is a discussion of the Trinity in general and a presentation of God as Father and God as Son as these beliefs operate in the dialogue. The belief in God as Spirit, in terms of grace, is the subject matter for the next chapter. The first part of this chapter is a discussion of the Trinity and Zen in the light of the Catholic authors who have participated in the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism. This is followed by a presentation of possible parallels in Zen, according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu, to the Christian belief in the Trinity and a description of Rahner's reflections on the Trinity, on God as Father, and on God as Son.

Roman Catholics in Dialogue with Zen on the Trinity

The experience of unity in diversity and diversity in unity or the question of the one and the many, as discussed in Chapter II, has often been interpreted, according

to William Johnston, by the Christian mystics "as a reflection of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity that speaks of identity in nature joined to separation of persons."¹

The possibility of a parallel in Zen to the mystery of the Trinity is presented by Thomas Merton, who takes his cue in this matter from D. T. Suzuki. The theme of Trinity in Zen and Christianity is taken up in a lengthy passage in Merton's essay "Mystics and Zen Masters,"² which begins with a discussion of the Zen intuition of Hui Neng:

The Zen intuition of Hui Neng is then an intuition of the metaphysical ground of all being and knowledge as void. This void itself is infinite. . . . The infinite emptiness is then infinite totality and fullness. The ground of this void is sunyata, but the pure void is also pure light, because it is void of all (limited) mind: and the light of the pure void manifests itself in act. But since this can be translated into positive terms, pure void is pure Being. And pure Being is by that very fact pure illumination. And the illumination springs from pure Being in perfect Actuality.³

Merton goes on to point out that this intuition, while intellectual, goes deeper than purely metaphysical speculation, to an experience which is the light of pure ontological contemplation. The striking realization for a Christian about this intuition is that being itself is seen to be ontologically constituted in a triadic relationship. Merton

¹Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 39.

²Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, pp. 39-41.

³Ibid., p. 39.

is also aware that this threefold structure of being is suggested by D. T. Suzuki, whom Merton quotes as saying:

There is no Being besides Seeing which is Acting; -
 . . . These three terms, Being, Seeing, Acting,
 were synonymous and interchangeable.⁴

This triadic structure, Merton points out, is not a doctrine, nor is it theological or explicitly religious. It is "an experience of the ground of being as pure void which is light and act because it is fullness and totality."⁵

Merton relates this triadic constitution of being to a threefold disposition of the mind in illumination. He writes:

First, the ground which is Void; second, the emptiness and nowhereness of no-mind which is dhyana (right meditation) and illumination; and third the act of realization, or prajna, in which the void and light are so to speak let loose in pure freedom and power to give and spend in action this self is no-self, this void which is the inexhaustible source of all light and act, and which has broken through into our own life bursting its limitations and uniting us to itself so that we are lost in the boundless freedom and energy of prajna-wisdom.⁶

Merton, finally, comments that this means a fulfillment in love, which fulfillment in love is said by Suzuki to be the most important thing of all.⁷ These possible correspondences are not developed any further by Merton. However, at another time when he is speaking of Suzuki's openness to

⁴Ibid., p. 40.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., pp. 40-41.

the Christian mystery of the Trinity, Merton suggests that because of this the "real area for investigation of analogies and correspondences between Christianity and Zen might after all be theology rather than psychology or asceticism,"⁸ but the theology is experiential rather than merely speculative.

Very little, other than the above, has been written by the Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen about any further relationships between Zen and Christianity in regard to the general teaching on the Trinity. These authors do not speak explicitly of God as Father, and reference is made once by William Johnston to the Spirit.⁹ Much more is said about Christ, who is central within Christianity. This question poses a profound problem for the meeting between Zen and Christianity. As Johnston points out:

In any dialogue between Christianity and other religions, the crux is obviously the Incarnation; . . . And yet, Christianity is Christ; it proclaims Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . . Zen contains nothing even vaguely resembling dialogue with Christ and meditation on his words.¹⁰

In a later book, Christian Zen, Johnston, while attempting to discover how Christianity and Zen are compatible, wonders "if through Zen we may not find a new approach to Christ, an approach that is less dualistic and more oriental."¹¹

⁸Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 58.

⁹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 80.

¹⁰Johnston, The Stillpoint, pp. 143-44.

¹¹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 48.

Using the distinction between the historical Christ and the cosmic Christ, he suggests that, without forgetting the historical Christ, we recall that for St. Paul, Christ is beyond concepts, beyond history, our original face before we were born, that is, we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. In the end, however, the cosmic and historic Christ must be linked together.¹²

Peter Kreeft says simply that Zen does not know Christ either as eternal Logos or as human Savior. Zen does not know the "eternal Logos," insofar as words are only conventional in Zen. It does not know Christ as Savior, insofar as in Zen the ego is to be transcended, not saved or transformed or redeemed. These observations are made in the light of Kreeft's general thesis that Zen and Christianity are complementary and not contradictory.¹³

Thomas Merton, treading very lightly while reviewing a book on Zen and Japanese art, says that the following statement is a "generous and perceptive statement of what the Buddhist might expect from his Christian brethren."

Christianity is a manifestation of the Incarnation of God, whereas Zen is intensive inward enlightening of the divine being which the Japanese has apprehended as Nothing, and which must be supplemented, uplifted and completed by means of the manifestation of the Incarnation.¹⁴

¹²Ibid., pp. 50-54.

¹³Kreeft, p. 528.

¹⁴Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 92.

Does Merton mean to imply here that Christianity can add a new dimension to Zen? Whether he does or not is not known. A further question can be asked. Is Zen really lacking an "incarnational" dimension"

A clue to a response to this question might be provided by Johnston who asks the opposite question, that is, "Can an incarnational religion like Christianity produce a genuine mysticism?"¹⁵ Johnston's response to this question goes beyond an understanding of the Incarnation simply in terms of the historical Jesus. He writes: "Catholic theology teaches that when the Word became flesh He united Himself through the humanity of Christ with all men who believe."¹⁶ The Incarnation, at a profound level, bespeaks the divinization of all men by God. The Christian, in his belief in Christ, becomes one with Christ, as St. Paul witnesses: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." Thus, the whole activity of the Christian mystic "is nothing else than the activity of Christ Himself."¹⁷ Johnston continues:

It is only by understanding this identification with Christ with its consequently Trinitarian effects that one can understand the near-panteism of some of the Christian mystics. As Christ, the Word of God, is of the same nature as the Father while being distinct from Him in personality, so the mystic is, by adoption, of one nature with God the Father while remaining distinct in person. Here again we are at the center of Christianity: at the Blessed Trinity.¹⁸

¹⁵ Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 144.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 146. ¹⁷ Ibid., 149. ¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 149-50.

The discussion of this chapter has moved from Merton's description of a threefold constitution of being which may correspond to the theology of the Trinity from "God's side," as it were, to Johnston's discussion of the Trinity, especially Christ, in terms of its "human function." For Johnston the Trinity is eminently expressive of unity and diversity and diversity in unity as applied both to God and to man and to the relation between God and man. As Christ is both one with the Father and distinct from Him, so a Christian mystic, in Christ, is one with the Father and yet distinct from Him.

Johnston extends the divinization of the individual Christian to a divinization of the universe. Following Teilhard, Johnston suggests that the divinized "I" becomes the divinized universe in the process of Christogenesis.¹⁹ These observations by Johnston point to two conclusions. The first conclusion is that there can be a genuine mysticism in Christianity based on the Incarnation. The second conclusion is that this approach approximates a less dualistic Christology and, hence, is more Oriental.

Granting these conclusions, there remains an important difference between Christianity and Zen in regard to the implications of belief in a cosmic Christ. This belief points to a "personal center" in Christianity which is not present in Zen, at least not in the same ontological manner. Merton, while speaking of

¹⁹Ibid., p. 158.

Hui Neng's triadic structure of being, clearly points to Christ as the "personal center" of Christianity. He writes:

We must also look to the transcendent and personal center upon which this love, liberated by illumination and freedom, can converge. That center is the Risen and Deathless Christ in Whom all are fulfilled in One.²⁰

William Johnston shares a comment made by a Zen roshi about Christ which gave Johnston an insight into the divine personality of Christ. The roshi, Johnston reports, said:

Satori could never be described or explained but there was undoubtedly enlightenment in the words of Jesus 'Before Abraham was, I am.' This, he said, was perfect enlightenment - no object, no duality, just 'I am.'²¹

Johnston's insight was that the "I" which spoke the "I am" was none other than the eternal Word which is the same "I" as that which spoke to Moses saying: "I am who I am."²²

Most of what has been said of Christ pertains to the Christian belief in Him as Mediator between God and man. Zen, in the enlightenment, gives emphasis to an immediacy. A question arises: Are mediacy and immediacy mutually exclusive? Also contained herein is the question of the relative importance of doctrine as teaching and experience: can teaching mediate the ultimate experience?

²⁰Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 42.

²¹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 13.

²²Ibid., p. 22.

This latter question will be treated in the final chapter of this dissertation.

In Chapter II, the question of unity and diversity was central. It is pointed out in the present chapter that, according to Johnston, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is most expressive of a diversity in unity and unity in diversity. Merton, following Suzuki, came to his conclusion that the ground of the dialogue between Zen and Roman Catholicism might best be found in theology because of Suzuki's interest in the Christian Trinity. Merton describes a triadic structure in life as he finds it in Zen: Being, Seeing, Acting. He does not relate this explicitly to the Christian Trinity, but rather points to both Zen's threefold structure of being and the Christian Trinity as central in both traditions. While speaking of the persons of the Trinity separately, little or nothing is said of the Father and the Holy Spirit by the Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen.

The themes that are discussed by these authors pertain mainly to Christ. Kreeft excludes the reality of Christ as eternal logos and savior from Zen, insofar as Zen approaches words as simply conventional and approaches the ego as transcended rather than saved or redeemed. Johnston, however, does ask if Zen can lead us to a new approach to Christ, an approach which, without denying the historical Christ, illuminates the cosmic Christ, the

Christ who is beyond concepts. Johnston also asks if an incarnational religion can produce a genuine mysticism. He responds by suggesting that the Incarnation can mean the divinization of all men and the cosmos by God. A difference, finally, between Zen and Christianity is that in Christianity there is a personal center which is lacking in Zen, at least in the same ontological manner.

A Triadic Structure of Existence in Zen

In this chapter issues are encountered which are especially difficult to discuss from a Zen point of view. The Trinity as Father, Son, and Spirit is a specifically Christian articulation of God and the relation between God, man, and the world. This section of the chapter is an attempt to find some themes in Zen in the writing of Suzuki and Hisamatsu which might correspond to the Christian beliefs in Trinity and in Christ.

A threefold structure of reality is presented by D. T. Suzuki in an essay entitled "The Zen Doctrine of No-Mind."²³ This structure is presented in the context of a comment by Suzuki on a saying of Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch of Zen: "See into your self-nature." It is quite possible that a reader would be tempted to distinguish between the "seeing" and the "self-nature" which is seen.

²³Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, pp. 157ff.

For Hui-neng this distinction is not accurate. Rather, self-nature which is being, is by the very fact that it is, self-knowing. Self-nature is self-knowledge. Self-nature is Self-nature precisely because it knows itself. The "seeing" is described by the term Prajna which is not separate from Being or Self-nature but the very expression or use of that Self-nature by which Self-nature is Self-nature. Suzuki sums this up when he writes:

Self nature finds its own being when it sees itself, and this seeing takes place by Prajna. But as Prajna is another name given to self-nature when the latter sees itself, there is no Prajna outside self-nature.²⁴

The relation between Seeing and Being, Prajna and Self-nature is not merely passive or quietistic. The Seeing is the very act of Self-nature without which act Self-nature is not Self-nature. Suzuki writes:

The seeing is an act, a revolutionary deed on the part of the human understanding whose functions have been supposed all the time to be logically analysing ideas, ideas sensed from their dynamic signification. The "seeing," especially in Hui-neng's sense, was far more than a passive deed of looking at, a mere knowledge obtained from contemplating the purity of self-nature; the seeing with him was self-nature itself, which exposes itself before him in all nakedness, and functions without any reservations.²⁵

It is in this sense that Seeing is Acting and we thus arrive at the "equation": Being is Seeing is Acting. Suzuki points this out when he writes that there is "no

²⁴Ibid., p. 178.

²⁵Ibid., p. 175.

Being besides Seeing which is Acting. . . . These three terms Being, Seeing and Acting [are] synonymous and interchangeable."²⁶ It is in this manner that Suzuki describes existence as triadic.

While discussing some schools of Mahayana Buddhism, Suzuki writes about the Buddhist Trikaya as the threefold body of the Buddha. It is the Dharmakaya, the Nirmanakaya, and the Sambhogakaya. Dharmakaya, according to Suzuki, is a "sort of the Absolute, or Essence-Body of all things."²⁷ Dharmakaya is a reality which transcends the limitations of this phenomenal world; yet is immanent everywhere manifesting itself and is that in which we live and more and have our being.²⁸ According to Suzuki, it may be a parallel conception to the first person of the Christian Trinity or better to the Godhead.²⁹ This eternal Dharmakaya is transformed and manifests Itself in the Nirmanakaya, the Body of Transformation. It assumes an earthly form as a human Buddha and as such responds to the needs of all people and desires to save all people. This Body of Transformation, according to Suzuki, may correspond to the historical Jesus.³⁰ The

²⁶Ibid., p. 178.

²⁷D. T. Suzuki, Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism (New York: Schocken, 1963), p. 21.

²⁸Ibid., p. 219.

²⁹Ibid., p. 256.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 256-58.

third Body of the Buddha, the Sambhogakaya, or the Body of Bliss

. . . is a corporeal existence and at the same time filling the universe and . . . there are two forms of the Body of Bliss, one for self-enjoyment and the other as a sort of religious object for the Bodhisattvas.³¹

This Buddha-Body is corporeal and infinite.³² The Sambhogakaya "is the person embodied with real insight, enjoying his own enlightenment or that of others."³³ Finally, Suzuki expresses a possible parallel between the Sambhogakaya and either the Christ of glory or the Holy Spirit.³⁴

While each of the Buddha-Bodies may be described as separate, they also may be discussed as related. The Nirmanakaya and the Sambhogakaya are dependent upon the Dharmakaya. Suzuki points this out when he quotes the Suvarna Prabha:

The first two forms of the Tathagata are provisional (and temporal) existences: but the last one is a reality, wherein the former two find the reason of their existence. Why? Because when deprived of the Dharma of Suchness and of knowledge of nonparticularity, no Buddha-dharma can exist; because it is Suchness and Knowledge of Suchness that Absorbs within itself all possible forms of Buddha-wisdom and renders possible a complete extinction of all passions and sins (arising from particularity).³⁵

³¹Ibid., p. 263.

³²Ibid.

³³Wing-tsit Chan, trans., The Platform Scripture (New York: St. John's University Press, 1963), p. 176, n. 74.

³⁴Suzuki, Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism, p. 256.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 257-58.

While there is a distinction among each of the members of the Trikaya, they are also interrelated. The Nirmanakaya and the ~~Sambhogakaya~~ ultimately arise from the Dharmakaya.

In a discussion of Zen and modern civilization, Hisamatsu refers to the Trikaya. He does not emphasize the triadic aspect of the Trikaya but focuses on the formless basis of the Trikaya. Quoting Shinran, he says that "the Supreme Buddha is without form."³⁶ The True Buddha, he goes on to say, is the Original Face of man. Being awakened to the Original Face is awakening to the True, Formless Mind or "seeing man's Nature and becoming Buddha." This awakening is not any objective awareness of the Buddha-Nature but rather the becoming of the Buddha-Nature which is the true face of man. The "seeing" or awakening is itself a being that which is awakened. Implicit here is Suzuki's triadic structure of life, that is, Being is Seeing is Acting which is the "True Man." All forms of the "True Man" including the Trikaya, are different modes of expression of the Buddha-Nature and have meaning as such.³⁷ Thus, Hisamatsu does not deny the teaching of the Trikaya. He conditions it in terms of the Buddha-Nature which is without form.

In the first part of this chapter the Catholic

³⁶Hisamatsu, "Zen" It's Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 31.

³⁷Ibid., p. 32.

authors spoke of the historical and the cosmic Christ. At issue in this discussion is the question of time and timelessness. This topic will be the next theme of this section on Zen.

Hisamatsu uses the category of "Presence" to speak of the Buddha in respect to time. Presence means that there is no distinction among past, present, and future. The Buddha does not exist in any one of these divisions of time, but rather exists "here and now." This is true time and goes beyond "ordinary" time.³⁸ Presence, here, is "nowness," which is not the ordinary present of the temporal sequence of past, present, and future. This does not mean that time is destroyed. Suzuki points out that in Zen, time and eternity are one. Eternity is possible only in the midst of time.³⁹ Time, in Zen, exists in the light of eternity. Zen is often regarded as a form of momentarism, that is, as focusing simply on the present, on the "now." "The momentalist is not conscious of eternity while living in time; each moment is to him just that and not more."⁴⁰ Zen, however, lives in the "absolute present" when time is "filled" with eternity. Thus, in Zen, there is not so much a denial of history, as is often thought, as there is an

³⁸Hisamatsu, Zen and the Fine Arts, p. 50.

³⁹Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 266.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 267.

affirmation of eternity or timelessness in history itself. It could be said that Zen time is full time, "fullness" of time which is timelessness. This is the sense that Suzuki wishes to communicate when he quotes the Diamond Sutra: "The past mind is unattainable, the future mind is unattainable, the present mind is unattainable."⁴¹ Eternity is, as it were, embodied in time and time is grounded in eternity.

The next point for discussion is a consideration of the possibility of an "incarnational" dimension in Zen. Zen involves direct contact with life. It is not something outside of life but is the very world of the given.⁴² The world of the given is not the ordinary givenness of life. It is rather the givenness expressed in the following remarks of one of the Zen Masters:

When I began to study Zen, mountains were mountains; when I thought I understood Zen, mountains were not mountains; but when I came to full knowledge of Zen, mountains were again mountains.⁴³

When the mountains are seen as separate from me as well as when the mountains are seen as dissolved into the oneness of things, they are not mountains. The mountains are mountains when I am in them and they are in me. This identity is such that neither I nor the mountains are wiped out.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 267.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 219, 256.

⁴³Ibid., p. 240.

Neither I nor the mountains vanish.

Suzuki gives expression to this with the term "suchness," or "Tathata,"⁴⁴ which he describes as the "viewing of things as they are: it is an affirmation through and through. I see a tree, and I state that it is a tree."⁴⁵ The tree is seen "such" as it is. Another way of trying to say this is that sunyata or emptiness or formlessness is awakened to itself and knows itself as itself, in its suchness. Thus suchness is emptiness or tathata is sunyata.⁴⁶ In Zen, therefore, there is no escape from the ordinary, everyday world but rather an affirmation of it insofar as it is seen to be what it is.

The last issue of this section is the question of a personal center in Zen. While listing some characteristics of satori, Suzuki says that "perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the Zen experience is that it has no personal note in it."⁴⁷ An appreciation of what Suzuki means by person is necessary for an understanding of this statement. Suzuki writes: "The problem of the person is finally reducible to that of the Self."⁴⁸ Person, in Zen, according to Suzuki, is not a predicate of man by which he is intelligent or objective, and hence dualistic. (It

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 241.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 263.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 264.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 106.

⁴⁸Suzuki, Fromm, DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 28.

must be emphasized that Zen does not deny intellectuality or objectivity. It sees them to be what they are.) Zen proclaims that there is another way besides objectivity, a way which Zen claims is more direct, real, and personal. This way is the way of absolute subjectivity. If a personal center is viewed in a dualistic manner, it does not reside in the "core" or Zen. However, if personal center is equated to that Self which is Absolute Subjectivity, the Buddha-Nature or the Formless Mind, then a personal center is of the essence of Zen. It may be called Sunyata (Emptiness) or Tathata (Suchness).⁴⁹

D. T. Suzuki maintains that reality is "one" with three dimensions. These dimensions, Being, Seeing, and Acting, are not separate but synonymous and interchangeable. Another triad found in Buddhism is the Trikaya or the threefold body of the Buddha: the Dharmakaya, the Nirmanakaya, and the Sambhogakaya. Hisamatsu points to the fundamental unity of the Trikaya without destroying its triadic character. For Hisamatsu the oneness and manyness of the Trikaya is discussed in terms of formlessness and form. A Zen approach to time and timelessness is described by Suzuki. For him time can be time only if it is grounded in eternity. Eternity itself is embodied in time. In Zen, according to Suzuki, there is an "affirmation" of the world

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 24-32.

insofar as Zen grasps life with bare hands or, in other words, affirms the ordinary, everyday world to be exactly what it is. Finally, according to Suzuki, a personal center may be spoken of in Zen in terms of the True Self.

Rahner on the Trinity

The third part of this chapter is a presentation of Karl Rahner's theology of the Christian belief in the Trinity. The first part of this presentation is concerned with Rahner's thinking in regard to the relation between the "immanent" Trinity or the Trinity from the "God-ward" side and the "economic" Trinity or the Trinity from the "man-ward" side. Following the discussion of this relation is a presentation of Rahner's articulation of the Christian belief in God as Father and in God as Son. The discussion of God as Spirit is taken up in the next chapter.

Rahner's articulation of the Christian belief in the "economic" and the "immanent" Trinity can be seen as a summary of his articulation of Christian faith. Rahner maintains that the three absolute mysteries of Christian faith are the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Grace.⁵⁰ These three mysteries are not separate realities but are ontologically related in the Christian faith experience. This relationship between the three absolute mysteries of Christian faith

⁵⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 7.

is expressed especially in Rahner's discussion of the "immanent" and the "economic" Trinity. Rahner points out that "in thinking of the Trinity we may start without misgivings from the experience of Jesus and His Spirit in us in the history of salvation and faith,"⁵¹ which is to start with the "economic" Trinity. He further maintains that the "immanent" Trinity is already contained in this beginning point. Rahner points out that the "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and vice-versa. He writes:

. . . God has given himself so fully in his absolute self-communication to the creature, that the 'immanent' Trinity becomes the Trinity of the 'economy' of salvation, and hence in turn the Trinity of salvation which we experience is the immanent Trinity. This means that the Trinity of God's relationship to us is the reality of God as he is in himself: a Trinity of persons.⁵²

Rahner elaborates his approach to the "economic" and "immanent" Trinity in an essay on the possibility of belief today.⁵³ He suggests that despite the complexity of its dogma and morality, Christianity proclaims something quite simple. Rahner writes:

What does Christianity declare? Nothing else after all, than that the great Mystery remains eternally a mystery, but that this mystery wishes to communicate Himself in absolute self-communication - as the infinite, incomprehensible and inexpressible Being whose name is God, as self-giving nearness - to the human soul in the midst of its experience of its own finite

⁵¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 69.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 3ff.

emptiness. This nearness has become a reality not only in what we call 'grace' but also in the historical tangibility of the One whom we call the Godman. In these two ways of divine self-communication - both by their radical, absolute nature, and by reason of the identity of the 'existence-in-itself' of God and his 'existence-for-us' - there is also communicated, and thus revealed, to us the duality of an inner-divine relationship: in other words, what we profess as the trinity of Persons in the one Godhead.⁵⁴

The Christian mystery concerns the incomprehensible, inexpressible Being whom we call God, who has communicated Himself to us in grace and in the Incarnation. This mystery is both distant and near. The radical, absolute nature of the mystery as near (grace and incarnation), reveals to us the Trinity of Persons in the one Godhead (mystery as distance). This identity of the near and the distant mystery is the identity of God in his "existence-in-itself" and his "existence-for-us." This identity is also expressed by Rahner when he maintains that the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity.

It might be thought that the Trinity is merely the way by which man, in his finiteness, experiences the fullness of God. But the trinitarian distinction is not only on man's side but also on God's side, as it were. This is a basic implication of the identity of the "immanent" and the "economic" Trinity.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 6.

This identity of "economic" and "immanent" Trinity also has implications in regard to the relation of each divine person to man. These relations are not simply appropriations but rather "each divine person has his own proper relationship to man in grace, even though each of these relations presupposes and includes the others."⁵⁵ A second implication here is that only the Logos can be the divine person to become man.⁵⁶

Finally, the Trinity "shows that the 'one' of the unity and plurality . . . is an ontological ultimate."⁵⁷ It is, Rahner suggests, absurd to think that one has arrived at a pure simplicity if a distinction of persons is not recognized. Rather Being as such (as one) emerges into a plurality as the very fulfillment of its being and unity. For Being to be one, it must be plural. The Trinity is the supreme mode of unity and plurality.⁵⁸

God as Father

It is very difficult to point to a difference in Rahner's approach to God as such, on the one hand, and to God as Father, on the other. Rahner's approach to God as such is presented first. This is followed by a discussion of his approach to God as Father.

⁵⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 71.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 71.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 227.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 228.

The word "God," according to Rahner, is the best word we can use to try to say what we want to say, for this word says nothing about that to which it is pointing. And by saying nothing, this word says that God is the Ineffable, the Nameless.⁵⁹ This is the manner by which Rahner most often speaks of God, that is, as nameless, indefinable, unattainable, aloof, absent,⁶⁰ in fact, as absolute mystery.⁶¹ This God is not one thing among many but rather the whole in such a way that he is the ground and origin which transcends even that whole as a silent abyss. Rahner writes:

God is not 'something' beside other things that can be integrated into a common homogeneous system. If we say 'God' we mean the whole, not indeed a sum of phenomena to be examined, but the whole in its incomprehensible and ineffable origin and ground which transcends that whole to which we and our experimental knowledge belong. This ground is meant by the word 'God,' the ground which is not the sum of individual realities but which confronts them freely and creatively without forming a 'higher whole' with them. God is the silent mystery, absolute, unconditioned and incomprehensible. God is the infinitely distant horizon to which the understanding of individual realities, their interrelations and their manipulation must always point. This horizon continues to exist just as

⁵⁹Karl Rahner, Grace in Freedom, trans. and adapted by Hilda Graef (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), pp. 191-92.

⁶⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 51ff.

⁶¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 60; also see Do you Believe in God, pp. 38-40.

distantly even when all the understanding and action relating to it have come to a standstill. God is the unconditioned, but conditioning ground, the sacred mystery because of this everlasting incomprehensibility.⁶²

This God who is the ground and sacred mystery is also the "one true unity in the plurality which is in man."⁶³ He is the origin of both matter and spirit and hence the basis of their unity.⁶⁴ God is not only the origin but also the future, the absolute future of the world and man.⁶⁵ God is the "horizon" of man and the world, a horizon which always recedes when man and world seem to come near to it, yet which is at the very origin of man, the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega.

Rahner writes of this in another way when he writes of God as the "whither" or the "whereunto" of transcendence which is also the very nature of man. He says:

The Whither of transcendental experience is always there as the nameless, the indefinable; the unattainable. . . . Since it is the condition of possibility for all categorized distinctions and divisions, it cannot itself be distinguished from other things by the same modes of distinction. The horizon cannot be comprised within the horizon, the whither of transcendence cannot really, as such, be brought within the range of transcendence itself to be distinguished from other things. . . . The Whither of transcendence is there in its own proper

⁶²Rahner, Grace in Freedom, pp. 191-92.

⁶³Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 18.

⁶⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 154.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 63.

way of aloofness and absence. . . . The Whither of transcendence can further be designated as the holy when the transcendence is regarded as that of freedom and love. . . . Man is, therefore, because his real being, as spirit, is transcendence, the being of holy mystery.⁶⁶

The same is true for the world.⁶⁷ All creation points toward and originates from God who is absolute mystery. Creation, as such, contains no absolute mysteries but, insofar as it transcends itself, partakes in the mystery called God. Hence, all understanding of creation--man and world--"is in the last resort always a 'reductio in mysterium.'"⁶⁸

Rahner is aware that what has been said up to this point is not necessarily Christian. He recognizes that what he says about God as such can also be said of the God of the philosophers. The God of the philosophers is a silent, distant God. The God of the Christian is not only remote but also near. It is this God who is remote and near who is called Father. Rahner writes:

The God of the philosophers is no 'Father,' but the incomprehensible ground of all reality which escapes every comprehensive notion because he is a radical mystery. This is always the beyond, the inaccessibly distant horizon bounding the small sphere we are able to measure. He certainly exists for us also in this way, as the unanswered question that makes room for our never-ending journey in thought and deed. But does this ineffable being which we call God exist only in this

⁶⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 50-53.

⁶⁷Rahner, "Hominization," pp. 40-51.

⁶⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 62.

way? That is the question. True, the distance which philosophical theology establishes between God and ourselves is still necessary to prevent us from confusing God with our own idols, and thus it is perhaps more than philosophy, it is a hidden grace. But the question whether God is only unapproachable ineffability must be answered in the negative. He is more, and we realize this in the ultimate experience of our existence, when we accept it without rejecting or denying it under pretext of its being too good to be true. For there is the experience that the abyss protects, that pure silence is tender, that the distance is home, and that the ultimate question brings its own answer, that the very mystery communicates itself as pure blessedness. And then we call the mystery whose customary cipher is 'God' - Father. For what else are we to call it?⁶⁹

This God who is Father is not known merely as a metaphysical entity which is ultimately distant and silent, but precisely as the silent, distant God who communicates himself while remaining silent. As Father, God is unoriginate God who communicates himself to man.⁷⁰

From a purely philosophical standpoint, there is the danger that man and the world will be conceived of as mere functions of God from which they come and toward which they move. In Christianity there is a profession not merely of who God is but also of how God behaves with regard to man. Rahner writes:

The kernel of what the New Testament declares about God's 'attributes,' then, is not a doctrine about God as an abstract metaphysical

⁶⁹Rahner, Grace in Freedom, pp. 196-97.

⁷⁰Karl Rahner, The Trinity, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 84.

entity, but an announcement about the concrete, personal countenance which God shows to the world.⁷¹

God is manifested as person insofar as he deals with man in an historical dialogue which means that man is allowed to be a person, that is, free. For the danger of seeing God as simply origin and future which totally engulf man and make him dependent on this origin and future is avoided in Christianity. It is avoided because, according to Rahner:

. . . the personal God so transcends the world that he can allow this world which is totally dependent on him, a genuine activity, even with regard to himself; that what is totally dependent on him acquires through his own urgency a genuine independence with regard to him; that God can set man free with regard to himself.⁷²

The God of the Christian is the remote, silent God who enters into an historical dialogue with man and hence manifests himself as remote yet near in such a way that, while man and creation are dependent on him as origin and future, man and creation are also genuinely independent of him. Both (man and God), then, are person. God, as Father, is an emphasis upon this type of transcendent, silent abyss, silence which is tender and an abyss which is home.

What is said about God as Father as near is more fully expressed in a discussion about God as Word and as Spirit. This discussion touches more precisely on the

⁷¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 112.

⁷²Ibid., p. 110.

self-communication of the remote God who remains silent in his very communication. It is, in fact, in his very self-communication that God is distant. Rahner says that the message of Christmas (celebration of the nearness of God) is that "God's remoteness is the incomprehensibility of his all-pervading nearness."⁷³

God as Son

The absolute self-communication of God to the world is Son "as the principle which itself acts and necessarily must act in history in view of this free self-communication."⁷⁴ God as Father points to God as primordial and underivative while God as Son points to God as acting in history. In Christianity this event of God acting in history is called "revelation." Often revelation is taken to be a certain number of propositions or truth statements spoken by God to man. Rahner, however, does not conceive of revelation in this manner. For him, revelation is:

. . . an historical dialogue between God and man in which something happens, and in which the communication is related to the continuous happening and enterprise of God.⁷⁵

Revelation is a continuous self-communication of God and

⁷³Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, trans. Karl-H. and Boniface Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1967), 28.

⁷⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 70.

⁷⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 48.

man in an event of dialogue. This dialogue, in Christian belief, comes to a quite definite term in Jesus. Rahner writes:

This continuous happening of saving history has now reached its never to be surpassed climax in Jesus Christ: God himself has definitively given himself to the world.⁷⁶

God, then, is not merely absent or distant or the silent abyss but also near, and his nearness "has become a reality . . . in the historical tangibility of the One whom we call the Godman."⁷⁷ It is, in fact, in the incarnation of God that the nearness is definitively manifested.

Rahner says this explicitly when he writes:

The incarnation of God means: Trust the nearness, because it is not void. . . . The incarnation says in the words of history, not only with the words of longing: The infinite mystery which silently surrounds you does not rush towards you so that you will flee from it into your own familiar little life until it overtakes and destroys you in death; it is not only the judgment which orders your small world from the distance and judges its guilty finiteness. It is rather the promising beatitude. It can approach us without destroying us, it can tenderly enter our heart without breaking it asunder, it does not, like a crushing judgment, dash from distant heavens into the small sphere of our existence. No, it comes as grace saving us into its own freedom which it makes ours.⁷⁸

The infinite mystery, or God, communicates his own freedom to us by becoming man, by emptying himself in such a way

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 48.

⁷⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 6-7.

⁷⁸Rahner, Grace in Freedom, p. 201.

that while he becomes another, he does not change his own proper reality but remains the unoriginated origin.⁷⁹

Thus, while God is Son, he remains Father. In fact, there is a fundamental relation between God as Father and as Son. Rahner quotes the Gospel according to John 14:9: "He that sees me sees the Father." The Son or Logos does not only reveal the Father but also, by being present, makes the Father present. This is closely related to Rahner's understanding of symbol from an ontological point of view. He writes:

The Logos, as Son of the Father, is truly, in his humanity as such, the revelatory symbol in which the Father enunciates himself, in this Son, to the world - revelatory, because the symbol renders present what is revealed.⁸⁰

The Son is filled with the fullness of the godhead. He is not only the presence and revelation of God but also all that God wants to be in the world in a final and unsurpassable manner.⁸¹ In the Son, God is Savior; this word signifies God's absolute communication of himself.⁸² This is exactly what is meant by the term "hypostatic union." If one believes, as the Christian does, that Jesus is the final, unsurpassable, definitive self-communication of God, then, in order to be unsurpassable, Jesus must be God himself. Every self-manifestation of God takes place through

⁷⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 114.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 239.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 237.

⁸²Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 174.

some finite reality and hence is transitory and surpassable. In order that God's absolute self-communication be absolute, final, and unsurpassable, it must not only be posited by God but be God himself given and received. Thus, the manifestation of God happens in a human reality and is God himself in order that it be a communication and unsurpassable. Explicitly, hypostatic union means, according to Rahner:

. . . in the human reality of Jesus, God's absolute saving purpose (the absolute event of God's self-communication) is simply, absolutely and irrevocably present; in it is present both the declaration made to us and its acceptance - something effected by God himself, a reality of God himself, unmixed and yet inseparable and hence irrevocable.⁸³

Rahner puts this another way when he speaks of the incarnation as "ipso facto present when the divine self-bestowal appears in history as absolutely and irrevocably uttered and absolutely and irrevocably received."⁸⁴

Rahner further illuminates the significance of the incarnation for the believing person when he takes up the question of the grounds on which this belief in the incarnation can be credible. A fundamental presupposition with regard to the "idea" of the Godman, which Rahner points out, is that man is that being which constantly transcends his own nature towards God. The climax of this transcendence happens in the Godman. Indeed the incarnation is the

⁸³Ibid., pp. 183-84.

⁸⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 64.

climactic and focal point of history.⁸⁵ Man is that being who "realizes himself when he gives himself away into the incomprehensible mystery of God."⁸⁶ He is the being whose center is outside himself, in God. From this point of view, "the incarnation of God is the uniquely supreme case of the actualization of man's nature in general."⁸⁷ Man is man insofar as he transcends himself. This self-transcendence "has reached an absolute and unsurpassable climax in a determinate man, who is an absolutely real man in every way."⁸⁸ This man is Jesus--true man and true God, that is, the very bestowal by God of himself as origin and future of man in history which reaches its climax of self-transcendence in an historical, self-transcendent man named Jesus. Jesus is true man reaching beyond himself into the infinite mystery of God to the point where he embodies this mystery. Jesus is true God insofar as he is the very "symbol" of God's self-communication, a symbol which effects that to which it points in such a way that it is the pointer and that to which it points.

It is precisely here that the mediatorship of Christ is expressed. As true God and true man Jesus "is

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 67-68.

⁸⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 393.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 393.

⁸⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 12.

now and for all eternity the permanent openness of our finite being to the living God of infinite, eternal life."⁸⁹ Jesus is that mediator who opens the way for the immediacy of God.

The specifically Christian connection with God is in its very immediacy mediated by the connection with Jesus, in other words, through a creaturely reality.⁹⁰

The Christian experience of God is mediated precisely through the finite which in Jesus is immediately God.⁹¹ Rahner speaks of Jesus as mediator in terms of unity and multiplicity. He writes:

Jesus is the mediator. He is that unity in which God, who in his simplicity is all in one, has assumed the multiplicity of reality, and its thirst for unity. He did this when he assumed creaturehood (which is never one in all) and assumed it, moreover, in the mode of a spiritual being (which craves for unity). In assuming it he made it his own reality, which remains eternally his own (even in its multiplicity), and yet it is precisely in virtue of this fact that this reality of creaturehood which he has assumed, while still retaining its multiplicity, is redeemed, set free for and drawn abidingly into the indivisible unity of God (this unity, in spite of having taken this creaturely multiplicity into itself still remaining pure and unalloyed).⁹²

God as Spirit

It is precisely in the self-communication of God as that which is given to us and accepted by us that Rahner

⁸⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 44.

⁹⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 11.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 13.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 218-19.

speaks of God as Spirit. This self-communication of God may also be called grace.⁹³ The development of Rahner's approach to grace and hence to God as Spirit is discussed in the next chapter.

For Rahner the relation between the "economic" Trinity or the Trinity as experienced by man and the "immanent" Trinity or the Trinity from the Godward side is a relation in which the "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity. Rahner's description of God includes not only the silent, distant, ineffable, incomprehensible God of the philosophers but also the God of the Christian who, though silent, communicates himself to man and who, while distant, is near. This God whom Christians call Father, is such because he is primordial and underivative. He is Son insofar as he acts in history and hence is near. Insofar as Jesus is true God and true man he mediates the immediacy of God. The mediatorship of Jesus expresses Rahner's articulation of the relation between unity and multiplicity.

Conclusion

In the previous two chapters, it was pointed out that there is a similarity between Zen and Christianity in the ground of their meeting. This similarity was found especially in the "root experience" of each of these traditions, that is, Zen enlightenment and Christian faith as

⁹³Rahner, The Trinity, p. 120; Theological Investigations 3, 86.

the encounter between God and the human. This similarity points to the fundamental similarity between the God of Christianity and the Buddha-Nature. The similarity is significantly expressed in the affirmation of both oneness and manyness, duality and nonduality in both traditions. These conclusions are further illuminated in a discussion of the Christian Trinity.

Thomas Merton has suggested that a possible point of correspondence between Zen and Christianity is the lived theology of the Trinity insofar as in the articulation of Zen by Suzuki there is a triadic structure of being. A further correspondence might be sought in the Buddhist Trikaya. However, even though there may be these overall similarities, the authors find difficulty in the particulars of Christian trinitarian belief in relation to the particulars of a three-fold structure of reality in Zen. The Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen have been quite hesitant to say that the correspondences (if they are recognized at all) are really there.

In the light of the theme of the one and the many, Christian trinitarian belief points to unity and diversity "in the divine being." Both poles of the one and the many are held together in the Trinity. The same would also be true for Hisamatsu's description of the Buddhist Trikaya. So also for Suzuki who points out that the three components of reality--Being, Seeing, and Acting--are not simply many

but are also one.

Rahner's affirmation that the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity not only deals with the "inner structure" of the Trinity but also with its outward reach." He not only affirms the unity and diversity of the "immanent" Trinity but also points out that the Trinity in itself and in relation to the world and the human is "one," yet at the same time, he affirms that there is a difference between God and the human. Thus, he holds that there is both unity and diversity in regard to the "immanent" and the "economic" Trinity. While this question will be taken up more fully in the next chapter, it is now suggested that there is a similarity between the "immanent" and "economic" Trinity in Christianity and "sunyata" and "tathata" in Zen. Zen contends that sunyata or emptiness is tathata or suchness. While there is both duality and nonduality in both emptiness and suchness, emptiness can also generally correspond to oneness and suchness to manyness or particularity. The Christian Trinity, at root, pertains to the Christian God and sunyata and tathata pertain, at root, to the Buddha-Nature.

Many difficulties arise, however, when the particulars of Christian trinitarian belief are discussed. The question is: Are there any similarities in Zen to the Christian belief in God as Father, as Son and as Spirit? The discussion of God as Spirit will be taken up in the

following chapter. In regard to God as Father, it is here suggested that there is a similarity between God as Father as the unthematic, noncategorical, infinite horizon as origin and end of all, on the one hand, and the Void in Zen. The Father, in Christianity, is not only far but also near, not only transcendent but also immanent. This would mean that both unity and diversity are expressed in the belief in God as Father. The Void in Zen would also seem to be "characterized" as transcendent and immanent, as both one and many.

There are many questions which have arisen in the meeting between Christianity and Zen in regard to God as Son, and the significance of Jesus in Christianity. It has been asked if there is the possibility of "incarnation" and the existence of a "personal center" in Zen. Johnston suggests that a significance of the incarnation could be found in the realization of the divinization of all people. He suggests that a bit of monism would do Christianity some good. However, as long as Johnston sees Zen as only monistic, he will not be able to find a correspondence in it to the Christian belief in the incarnation. However, if it is granted that Zen is both monistic and dualistic, that is, that it affirms both oneness and manyness, a similarity between Zen and Christianity is seen in the following manner. The incarnation is a belief which signifies an absolute affirmation of the human and the world; in Zen suchness

is also an affirmation of the particularity of the human and the world. Thus, while incarnation and suchness do not seem to be the same, their function is similar. If the functions are similar, then there must be a fundamental similarity in the grounds of the functions.

Another central, though difficult, question, arises in regard to the belief in Christ as a "personal center" in Christianity. For Zen, it could be asked if the Zen Master, who has realized the Buddha-Nature, could be considered a personal center? From the point of view of the affirmation of both unity and diversity or oneness and manyness, it would seem that there is some similarity between Christ and the Zen Master. The Zen Master could be considered a "personal center" insofar as he brings us face-to-face with "formless form." Jesus, a Christian believes, is the revelation of God. The Zen Master not only points to the moon, but is also the moon itself. Christ not only mediates immediacy but is also the immediacy which is mediated. A fundamental problem in this discussion is the "concept" of person. The problem pertains to the affirmation of both oneness and manyness. Often person is a differentiating characteristic and, hence, participates in the many. To move the discussion further, person would have to be spoken of, in Christianity, as a reality which is not only differentiating but also as undifferentiated.

A caveat must be entered before one affirms any of the previous conclusions. This warning relates to the conclusion of the previous chapter in which it was pointed out that none of the Catholics who have been in dialogue with Zen have met Zen at its root, that is, the realization of Oriental Nothingness. Merton has pointed out a possible correspondence between Zen and Christianity in terms of a common triadic structure of reality: Being is Seeing is Acting. Implicit in Merton's understanding of this triadic structure is its grounding in Being. His source is Suzuki. A further purview of Suzuki will, however, show that for Suzuki, being is equated with nonbeing, isness with not-issness, seeing with not seeing, ignorance with knowledge, purity with nothingness, action with non-action. These realizations are contrary to the fundamental experience of God as expressed in Thomistic theology where Being is fundamental and Nonbeing is denied any reality in accord with the principle of contradiction. Thus, it might be concluded, again, that before the meeting between Zen and Catholicism might proceed there must be an awareness of the fundamental grounding of Zen in Oriental Nothingness and further that if any correspondences are to be found between Zen and Catholicism, one must go beyond the traditional Thomistic theological affirmations.

CHAPTER IV

GRACE

An important and seemingly controversial theme in the meeting between Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism is grace. The approach to this issue by Roman Catholics in dialogue with Zen Buddhists will be presented and this will be followed by a Zen approach to the theme of grace. Finally, there will be a discussion of Rahner's theology of grace which is a continuation of his discussion of the Christian Trinity with respect to God as Spirit.

Grace as Discussed by Roman Catholics in Dialogue with Zen

When Enomiya-Lassalle speaks of Zen Enlightenment and Christian mysticism, he often distinguishes them by saying that enlightenment is a natural phenomenon and the Christian mystical union is supernatural. He writes:

We must remember that mysticism is essentially a supernatural happening, and enlightenment is, at least theoretically, a purely natural phenomenon.¹

When speaking of Zen as purely natural, Enomiya-Lassalle does not do so in a pejorative manner. He maintains that

¹Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 90.

"the Oriental religions have made much better use of the natural faculties of man than the Christian religion has done."² The Christian should not be afraid of using these natural faculties. They can be a powerful aid to him in meditation, e.g., zazen can help to overcome dryness by helping achieve a prayerful recollection.³ But this recollection is not mysticism. It is much closer to acquired contemplation.

Can zazen help one toward infused contemplation or mysticism? While Enomiya-Lassalle's response to this question is a definite "no," his reasoning is subtle. Enomiya-Lassalle's argument begins by stating that the natural cannot be separated from the supernatural, that is, no one is in the state of pure nature. It cannot be proved that enlightenment is arrived at without grace. But the point is that "no extraordinary grace is required for receiving enlightenment,"⁴ which therefore is a natural phenomenon. Christian mysticism has always presupposed grace. The supernatural is essential.⁵ Enomiya-Lassalle concludes:

No natural forces could account for the Christian mystical experience. Even an assist of grace to natural forces would not suffice. Therefore, enlightenment, sublime an achievement as it is, cannot be identified with mystical experience. Nor can it be guaranteed to lead to mystic experience.⁶

²Ibid., p. 88.

³Ibid., pp. 85, 86.

⁴Ibid., pp. 90-91.

⁵Ibid., p. 77.

⁶Ibid., p. 91.

While Zen can be an aid in meditation, it does not guarantee or cause a Christian mystical experience. Zen is natural and therefore closer to acquired contemplation. Christian mysticism or infused contemplation is supernatural and hence graced. Enomiya-Lassalle continues to hold this position in his most recent book, Zen: Meditation für Christen. He agrees with Jan Ruysbroeck that there is a possibility for a natural preparation for supernatural mysticism. In the context of a discussion of the mysticism of Eckhart, Enomiya-Lassalle concludes that in the attainment of a mystical conversion, there is a fundamental difference between Zen and Christianity. Enomiya-Lassalle writes:

In Zen this conversion is attained through one's own power almost as a unique cause; whereas Eckhart emphasizes the effect of the grace of Christ in contrast to holiness by works which at this time was particularly in vogue.⁷

H. Dumoulin seems to concur with Enomiya-Lassalle on this matter. The Zen experience, Dumoulin suggests, can best be categorized as "natural mysticism" and can be distinguished from the "supernatural mysticism of grace."⁸ He goes on to say that faith in a personal God is the minimal prerequisite for grace. Since this "faith" is not present in Zen, satori is a natural mysticism.⁹ Finally,

⁷Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation für Christen, p. 147.

⁸Dumoulin, A History of Zen Buddhism, p. 282.

⁹Ibid., p. 284.

satori, as a mystical phenomenon, is imperfect. For

no human effort to attain enlightenment, no matter how honest and self-sacrificing, can ever lead to the perfect truth, but only the eternal Logos 'who coming into the world enlightens every man' (John 1:9).¹⁰

Dom Graham approaches this problem from another angle. He says:

God's activity toward us, His 'realizing His own image, takes place at two levels--that of nature and that of grace: though the whole process is in fact a 'gracious' one, being independent of any merit on our part.¹¹

After this affirmation of the "graciousness" of both nature and grace, Graham comments on the theological axiom:

"Grace perfects and therefore presupposes nature," in such a way that he challenges Catholics to learn from Zen the importance of the natural. If the divine initiative is blocked at the natural level, it is also blocked in the order of grace. Hence, one cannot be holy and "unnatural" at the same time. A Zen Buddhist can help a Catholic to see into nature and hence be open to grace.¹² For Zen, in comparison with Yoga, which claims to be a self-sufficient system, is open to God's grace.¹³ How this is, Graham does not say specifically.

William Johnston questions both the distinction

¹⁰Ibid., p. 290.

¹¹Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 32.

¹²Ibid., p. 33.

¹³Ibid., p. 168.

between natural and supernatural and the typical interpretation of Zen as Pelagian. In regard to the latter, he writes:

We must study more carefully the Zen 'self-reliance'. . . Time and again Western theologians have read into Zen a radical Pelagianism that has no place for grace and is incompatible with Christian trust in God. But is Zen really so Pelagian? Perhaps it is. But on the other hand, it is not impossible that this self-reliance has much in common with the renunciation of John of the Cross who demands a complete detachment from everything (even from thoughts and ideas of God) in order that one may rely on pure faith which is like the night of the soul.¹⁴

The suggestion here is that there is a possible correspondence between grace and detachment in Christian mysticism and "self-reliance" in Zen. Johnston suggests this in another place where he writes:

In its final stages Eastern meditation too speaks of an incalculable factor, of something quite unpredictable - that is the ultimate enlightenment that no master can teach and no disciple can achieve unless it comes from a force outside which even in Zen, has been called 'grace.' But this is at the end. Before this stage is reached much has been taught by the wisdom of the Eastern guru.¹⁵

Johnston is also dissatisfied with the distinction between Christian and non-Christian mysticism which holds that the former is graced while the latter is reached by unaided nature. From the non-Christian point of view, this

¹⁴William Johnston, "Dialogue with Buddhism," Monchanin-Information 2m 7 (September 1969): 7.

¹⁵William Johnston, "Mystical Prayer - Can It Be Taught?" Review for Religious 28, 6 (September 1969): 761.

distinction may come across as a triumphalistic Christian attitude--that is, that the Christian mystical experience is phenomenologically superior to that of other religions. Johnston avoids this but also warns us about the other extreme, that is, that everyone is in grace and that all mysticism is supernatural.¹⁶ He would rather abandon the whole natural-supernatural approach. He writes:

Mysticism which arises from and culminates in love of God in Christ is Christian; that which does not (but remains a simple intuition of the truth) is non-Christian. Nor does the Christian claim that his experiences are deeper, more soul-stirring, more phenomenologically extraordinary than those of his non-Christian brother.¹⁷

Thomas Merton, while commenting on the Buddhist statement, "Be a lamp unto yourselves," warns us against interpreting this in a Pelagian or semi-Pelagian manner. He writes:

The Buddha is warning his disciples against reliance on external means, ritual forms, and ascetic systems. He is by no means telling them to rely on themselves "instead of" on "grace" (a concept which does not enter into consideration at this point). They are to rely on nothing but "the truth" as they experience it directly.¹⁸

When speaking of sudden enlightenment, Merton wonders if this could be understood, in Christian terms, as grace.¹⁹

¹⁶ Johnston, The Stillpoint, pp. 128-29.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 129-30.

¹⁸ Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, pp. 218-19.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 228.

Yet at another time he makes a theological distinction between sunyata and the "dark night" of John of the Cross. The former, he says, is the natural ground of being and the latter is graced.²⁰ Sunyata, he says, is not a theological term. Yet, according to Merton, neither is Zen to be equated with acquired contemplation.²¹

A little later in his life Merton suggests that grace and emptiness are similar phenomena. Grace here is not something given to us by God from without but rather the gift of God himself. Grace, understood in this way, goes beyond dualism. The gift which is grace is the very gift of the Spirit which is the gift of freedom and emptiness.²²

Peter Kreeft finds Zen and Christianity quite compatible on this question of grace. He asks: "Am I saved by 'grace' or by 'realization'?"²³ He then lines up the problem: Christianity seems to teach: (1) salvation, (2) by free will acceptance, (3) of the divinely initiated supernaturally impinging gift of grace from without. Zen seems to teach: (1) realization or enlightenment, (2) by understanding, (3) the always present divinity within. In this lineup, Kreeft finds various pairs of opposites:

²⁰Ibid., p. 242.

²¹Ibid., p. 21.

²²Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, pp. 136-37.

²³Kreeft, p. 528.

salvation and enlightenment, grace and understanding, choice and realization, volition and vision, love and knowledge. These opposites, he says, are proximately two, but ultimately one. In regard to the presence of the divinity as within or without, Kreeft speaks of the "personal" and ever-present divinity within as "necessary." Kreeft suggests that the opposition of the operation of the divine from without and from within is not incompatible. Thus, he does not understand Zen and Christianity to be opposed in regard to grace.²⁴

A distinction that is often made between Christianity and Zen is that the former is graced while the latter is a discipline solely dependent on the natural powers of man. Zen is thus, from a Christian perspective, categorized as Pelagian. Both Enomiya-Lassalle and Dumoulin develop this distinction. Zen, they say, is, at root, a natural mysticism to be compared to acquired contemplation. Christian mysticism is, on the other hand, a supernatural or graced phenomenon. Dumoulin rests his case on the lack of faith, in Zen, in a personal God, which faith is a prerequisite for grace. Enomiya-Lassalle is somewhat more cautious insofar as he suggests that while Zen satori does not require grace, it does not necessarily exclude the work of grace. Graham tries to find a meeting of the Zen and

²⁴Kreeft, pp. 528-29.

Christian approaches to grace by building on the Thomistic axiom: "Grace perfects and hence presupposes nature." Johnston takes this further and questions the natural-versus-supernatural construct. While not denying the possibility that Zen is simply self-reliance, he suggests that there may be a relation between this self-reliance and detachment which itself rests on faith and hence is graced. Thomas Merton follows a somewhat similar line of thought when he relates grace and emptiness. He also warns against a Pelagian interpretation of the Zen "self-reliance." Finally, Peter Kreeft finds the relation between realization and grace to be similar to that between God as subjective and objective--they are compatible rather than contradictory.

Zen on Grace

The question that is discussed in the second section of this chapter is the relationship, in Zen, between grace and self-reliance. Suzuki points out that "Zen is a religion of jiyu, 'self-reliance.'"²⁵ Hence, one of the major factors in Zen is a great resolution.²⁶ This resolution is especially evident in the initiation of a Zen monk who is called upon to pursue his goal of satori with absolute determination. During this pursuit he is guided

²⁵Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 6.

²⁶Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 145.

and prodded and comforted by the Zen master but when all is said and done satori cannot be reached except by oneself through one's own efforts.²⁷ Suzuki points out that "Zen is a religion of will-power, and will power is what is urgently needed by the warriors, though it ought to be enlightened by intuition."²⁸

Much of the writing about Zen by Suzuki tends to focus on the epistemological aspect of satori. a closer reading, however, will uncover the fundamental necessity of the will in Zen enlightenment. Suzuki writes:

When we speak of enlightenment or illumination we are apt to think of its epistemological aspect and to forget the presence of a tremendous willpower behind it--the power in fact making up the entire being of an individual.²⁹

In some places Suzuki says that "the will is more fundamental than the intellect and makes up the ultimate principle of life."³⁰ The intellect may uncover the problem but it cannot, of itself, solve the problem. To achieve this is the function of the power of the will. Suzuki writes:

²⁷Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, pp. 61, 244.

²⁸Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 63.

²⁹Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 127.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 79.

The intellect is needed to determine however vaguely, where the reality is. And the reality is grasped only when the intellect quits its claim on it.³¹

The breakthrough is an act of the will or better, "enlightenment is an act of intuition born of the will."³²

What is the will? How is it more fundamental than the intellect? Suzuki responds to these questions while relating the will to being and becoming:

The rocks are where they are - this is their will. The rivers flow - this is their will. The plants grow - this is their will. The birds fly - this is their will. Human beings talk - this is their will. The seasons change, heaven sends down rain or snow, the earth occasionally shakes, the waves roll, the stars shine - each of them follows its own will. To be is to will and so is to become. There is absolutely nothing in this world that has not its will. The one great will from which all these wills, infinitely varied, flow is what I call the "Cosmic (or ontological) Unconscious," which is the zero-reservoir of infinite possibilities.³³

In other words, the will is tathata and sunyata or the Buddha-Nature. Thus, when Zen speaks of "self-reliance" or of "will-power," it is not speaking of the psychological ego or self but of the True Self. Suzuki points this out and then relates the intellect and the will.

This will as it is in itself is pure act, and no taint of egoism is there; this is awakened only

³¹Suzuki, Fromm, DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 49.

³²Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 126.

³³Suzuki, Fromm, DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 51.

when the intellect through its own error grows blind as to the true working of the will and falsely recognizes here the principle of individualization. The Buddha thus wants an illumined will and not the negation of it. When the will is illumined and thereby when the intellect is properly directed to follow its original course, we are liberated from the fetters which are put upon us by wrong understanding, and purified of all the defilements which ooze from the will not being correctly interpreted. Enlightenment and emancipation are the two central ideas of Buddhism.³⁴

Thus, while there is much effort in the struggle of the will for satori, the effort itself is fruitless except it arise from the selfless self which, when it does, is itself satori. This is grace in Zen. Grace here is givenness as expressed in the nature of the will, e.g., "the rivers flow - this is their will." Man can become enlightened--this is his will. To be and to become is to will.

Hisamatsu expresses this in another way. After saying that Zen relies on nothing, that is, is independent, he points out the duality in "that which relies" and "that which is relied upon." Zen goes beyond this duality to a nonduality of "Self-sustaining Independence."³⁵

Grace and effort is another expression of the above duality. Self-sustaining Independence includes both grace (Self-sustaining) and effort (Independence) and hence is

³⁴Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 158.

³⁵Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 27.

absolutely graceful and absolutely self-reliant. The very Self can be expressed as graceful effort.

Thus, while Zen is a matter of will-power and hence of effort, the will itself is the Buddha-Nature or sunyata. Hence, the effort is not simply that of the psychological self but of the Buddha-Nature that we are, which is grace.

Karl Rahner on Grace

The third section of this chapter is a presentation of Karl Rahner's approach to grace. This theme is also a development of Rahner's ideas about God as Spirit. One of the major issues in Rahner's discussion of grace is the relation between nature and grace. Rahner has entered the lists of this discussion by finding the 'standard' view as incomplete. The 'standard' view to which he refers is that of post-Tridentine neo-scholastic theology. Rahner begins his description of this view by pointing out that according to it grace itself is beyond consciousness and completely outside our experience.³⁶ This is so, in the 'standard' view, insofar as grace is strictly supernatural,³⁷ and known only from the teaching of faith.³⁸ Grace is some-

³⁶Karl Rahner, Nature and Grace, trans. Dinah Wharton (London: Sheed and Ward, 1963), p. 4.

³⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 49.

³⁸Rahner, Nature and Grace, p. 4.

thing over and beyond man's conscious spiritual and moral life.³⁹ Thus, there arises a division between grace and nature, with nature being "what we experience of ourselves without revelation."⁴⁰ Nature and grace are conceived as two layers laid on top of one another. It is true that grace is the fulfillment of nature but this is so only negatively, that is, there is no contradiction in the fact that nature can be elevated by grace.⁴¹ Grace, in a word, is an extra that can be added onto nature. It is not intrinsically bound up with nature. Hence, this view has been called an extrinsicist view of grace.

For Rahner, grace and nature are intimately bound together. Man is understood as spirit, that is, as orientation toward God; in other words, man can be 'defined' as the "limitless receptivity to God in one who is not God."⁴² It is of his nature that man is potentia oboedientialis for the divine life.⁴³ The relation between nature and grace in man is not that of a two-layered structure; rather, grace itself is intrinsic to historical nature. Rahner writes:

³⁹Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 6.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 7.

⁴²Karl Rahner, "Man (Anthropology): Theology." Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, ed. Karl Rahner, Cornelius Ernst, and Kevin Smyth, vol. 3 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 368.

⁴³Rahner, Nature and Grace, p. 41.

Actual human nature is never 'pure' nature, but nature in a supernatural order, which man (even the unbeliever and the sinner) can never escape from.⁴⁴

Thus, grace or the supernatural is intrinsic to the human. In order to understand this relationship better, it is necessary to describe the nature of grace for Rahner.

The nature of God as incomprehensible and holy mystery, as silent and distant has been pointed out in Chapter III. Grace (essential in Christianity) is the very nearness of the abiding mystery.⁴⁵ Grace is nothing other than the self-communication of God.⁴⁶ God does not wish to remain merely a remote abyss or horizon but gives himself to us in a real communication such that we become partakers of the divine life. God himself is grace.⁴⁷ This grace which is God himself communicated to us is called "uncreated grace."

Uncreated grace is closely related to "created grace." which is what happens to man who accepts uncreated grace. Rahner sees the relation between uncreated grace and created grace as a relation between formal and material cause. He writes:

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 36.

⁴⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 56; 5, 6.

⁴⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 63.

⁴⁷Rahner, Do You Believe in God, p. 40; Nature and Grace, p. 21.

. . . created grace is seen as causa materialis (dispositio ultima) for the formal causality which God exercises by graciously communicating his own Being to the creature. In this way the material and formal causes possess a reciprocal priority: as dispositio ultima created grace is in such a way the presupposition of the formal cause that it can itself only exist by way of the actual realization of this formal causality.⁴⁸

This discussion of the relationship between material cause and formal cause is a central concept in Rahner's approach to grace. It leads to the most basic concept in Rahner's theology of grace, i.e., quasi-formal causality. It has been seen that grace is not so much an extrinsic appendage to nature as it is the very self-communication of God which is intrinsic to actual or historical nature or to historical man.

Rahner does not view the relation between God and man in grace as a relation of his efficient causality but rather as a relation of quasi-formal causality. Formal causality is a way of speaking about what something is. It is the essence or nature of something. As a cause, the formal cause contributes its own determination or specification to the effect such that this determination or essence is intrinsic to the effect. Thus, to speak of grace in terms of formal causality would mean that grace, as the self-communication of God, would be the communication to man of the very essence of God such that man would essentially be God. This is very close to pantheism.

⁴⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 341.

Rahner wishes to avoid the possibility of pantheism. This is the power of the "quasi" in quasi-formal causality. The relation between God and man is spoken of as if it were one of formal causality. Grace is intrinsic to man as in formal causality, but it does not absolutely determine man's essence and hence the causality is quasi-formal. Rahner wishes to preserve an intrinsic relation between God and man and also to preserve the otherness of God in relation to man. A brief description of how Rahner works through this seeming contradiction also manifests the manner by which he deals with the problem of grace and effort.

In a number of his essays Rahner discusses the philosophical and theological meaning and significance of "becoming."⁴⁹ It is within the context of this discussion that one may conceive of Rahner's approach to the relationship between God and man and also conceive of his approach to the relationship between the activity of God and the activity of man.

For Rahner, true becoming is not merely a "becoming other" but a "becoming more." The "more" here is not a mere something added to what was there before. "More" involves an increase of the density of being. It also must

⁴⁹Rahner, Hominization, pp. 62-93; Theological Investigations 5, 164-68.

be truly or really effected by the previously existing reality.⁵⁰ There are two essential elements in this becoming. The first element is that it is impossible for something to make itself more than itself by its own power. The second element is that that which becomes more is actively effective in its own becoming more. Another way to express these two elements is that the process of becoming is an active self-transcendence in which both the "self" and the "transcendence" are taken seriously.

Something cannot transcend itself by its own power. There must be an "outside" power of being which ultimately has to be the absolute fullness of being. Otherwise, there would not be a "becoming more." But in order for something to become truly more, it also must participate in the process of becoming. Thus, the "fullness of being" which enables something to become more itself must be within the thing becoming more. Rahner writes:

This absolute fullness of being must be thought of as something so interior to the finite being moving towards its fulfillment that the finite being is empowered by it to achieve a really active self-transcendence and does not merely receive this new reality passively as something effected by God.⁵¹

Thus, in order for there to be true becoming, absolute fullness of being must be interior to that which is becoming. This fullness of being is uncreated grace which

⁵⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 164.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 165.

is an activating cause.

In the previous paragraph the two elements in "becoming" are still intertwined. The first element of transcendence is made possible through the power of the absolute fullness of being which is other than that which is becoming and by reason of its otherness enables that something to become more. But that (and this is the second element) which becomes more will not become more unless it itself participates in its own becoming more. The absolute fullness of being must be within that which is becoming more for there to be a real active self-transcendence. But the fullness of being must not be such that it constitutes the essence of that which becomes more. Otherwise, there would be no distinction between absolute fullness of being and finite being. Hence, Rahner writes:

This power of self-transcendence must at the same time be thought of as so distinct from finite, acting being that it is not permissible to conceive it as a constitutive principle of the essence of this finite being achieving itself.⁵²

The fullness of being, as an activating ground, belongs to the constitution of that which is becoming, but this fullness of being is not an intrinsic constituent of the finite being as such. The fullness of being acts in the finite being as a formal cause which communicates to the finite being its own power. The fullness of being acts as

⁵²Ibid.

a quasi-formal cause insofar as it is not determinative of the very essence of the finite being. That which becomes cannot become more by itself but also cannot become more unless it itself is involved in the becoming more. The fullness of being both supports the finite being in its becoming more and allows this becoming to be a movement of the finite being itself. It is in this way that grace is a quasi-formal cause. It is in this manner that true becoming involves both grace and effort. In other words, God creates man in such a way that man is disposed to receive his communication of himself. The very condition for the possibility of grace is also grace. Rahner describes this relationship between man and grace in a kerygmatic way when he writes:

We should like to try to suggest in a few brief words how we ourselves conceive of the relationship between man and grace. God wishes to communicate himself, to pour forth the love which he himself is. This is the first and the last of his real plans and hence of his real world too. Everything else exists so that this one thing might be: the eternal miracle of infinite Love. And so God makes a creature whom he can love: He creates man. He creates him in such a way that he can receive this Love which is God himself, and that he can and must at the same time accept it for what it is: the ever astounding wonder, the unexpected, unexacted gift.⁵³

This statement implies that man is able to receive God, that is, he has a congeniality for God.⁵⁴ The gift of Love must also be a free gift, that is, unexacted (supernatural).

⁵³Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 340.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 311.

Man must be open to the supernatural in such a way that it is not unconditionally demanded.⁵⁵ This, in essence, is the nature of grace as Rahner describes it.

To speak of grace is to speak of the love of God for man and the love of God in man. To speak of grace is to speak of the self-communication of God to man which may be called by the name of Love. To speak of grace is to speak of God as Spirit. To experience grace is to experience the visitation of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁶ Rahner speaks of the Spirit as the gift of the Father which is mediated to us through the Son. He writes:

The gift of the Father through the Son, . . . in which he communicates himself to us in immediate proximity and through which he causes us to accept this self-communication, is the 'Spirit' of the Father and the Son. As self-communication of God he (Spirit) is God as given in love and powerful in us in love.⁵⁷

Conclusion

According to Rahner grace is the self-communication of God to the human. This relationship between God and the human is described by him as a quasi-formal causality. This description attempts to give expression to a fundamental oneness of God and the human while preserving the separateness of God and the human. Thus, for Rahner, the theme of grace manifests his attempt to describe the relationship between God and the human in such a way that both oneness

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 315

⁵⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, p. 86.

⁵⁷Rahner, The Trinity, p. 60.

and manyness are affirmed. Insofar as the God-human relationship is a formal causality, oneness of God, and the human is affirmed. Insofar as this relationship is a quasi-formal causality, the separateness of God and the human is expressed. In terms of duality and nonduality, formal causality is expressive of nonduality and the "quasi" of quasi-formal causality," is an attempt by Rahner to express the relationship between God and the human as a dual nondualism. This approach to grace leaves the human both dependent (formal causality; nonduality) and independent (quasi-formal causality; duality).

Rahner's description of grace is different from that of Enomiya-Lassalle who, in effect, affirms the duality of grace and nature with a hint of their nonduality. Enomiya-Lassalle expresses this in his distinction between Christian mysticism and Zen as the distinction between supernatural and natural. Yet, Enomiya-Lassalle goes on to say that the natural and the supernatural cannot be totally separate. When he applies this to Zen he hints that while Zen enlightenment may be an expression of supernatural grace, it is fundamentally a natural phenomenon attained through one's own power. The difference between Rahner and Enomiya-Lassalle is the distinction between grace as intrinsic and extrinsic as discussed by Rahner. Enomiya-Lassalle finds that Zen and Christianity are quite different because of this issue of grace. In the light of Rahner, as will be suggested, this difference is not so obvious.

The approaches of Merton and Johnston to the theme of grace are more similar to that of Rahner than to Enomiya-Lassalle. Johnston cuts through the "traditional" grace-nature dichotomy. His concern, however, is not to explain the relation between God and the human. Rather, it is to undercut any superiority a Christian stance might take in relation to Zen. Rahner, then, would affirm Johnston's position and be able to give it a theological validation.

Merton would seem to be closer to Rahner insofar as he described grace as the self-communication of God. Rahner, again, more fully articulates what he means by grace and hence provides Merton with a theological grounding. Rahner also goes beyond both Johnston and Merton when he sees the two issues of "grace and effort" and "supernatural-natural" as interrelated in terms of quasi-formal causality. It is the contention of this conclusion that Rahner's theology of grace is more congenial to Zen than that of Enomiya-Lassalle and can provide a firmer foundation to the Christian-Zen meeting than has been expressed by Johnston and Merton.

The Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu is not self-reliant in the usual Western Pelagian sense of the word. Suzuki speaks of self-reliance in terms of the will-power necessary to reach satori. He then describes this will-power as "arising" from the Buddha-Nature. This means that for Suzuki the "self" of "self-reliance" is not the psychological ego but rather the True Self which is the Buddha-

Nature.

Hisamatsu develops this further when he points out the duality of "that which relies" and "that which is relied upon." He says that Zen goes beyond this duality to a condition of "Self sustaining Independence." In this context, "self-reliance" is reliance on the Self which is sunyata (the Buddha-Nature) which is the ground of life in such a way that the human is both independent (self-reliant) and Self-sustaining, that is, sustained by the True Self or Buddha-Nature. Thus, for Hisamatsu, the grace-effort dichotomy is understood as a nondual dualism where "Self-sustaining" is expressive of "grace" and "independence" is expressive of "effort."

The point at issue in this conclusion is whether or not there is a fundamental difference or fundamental similarity between Zen and Christianity in terms of the theme of grace. Enomiya-Lassalle sees this theme as developed in Zen and Christianity in fundamentally different manners. For Johnston and Merton, the differences are not so evident. Neither of these men develop the discussion.

It is suggested in this dissertation that there is some similarity between Zen and Christianity in regard to this issue of grace. This similarity can be found in Rahner's discussion of grace in terms of "quasi-formal causality" and Hisamatsu's discussion of self-reliance in terms of "Self-sustaining Independence." The similarity

is initially to be found in the fact that both Rahner and Hisamatsu affirm both duality and nonduality. Granting this similarity between Rahner and Hisamatsu, it can be inferred that, at bottom, there is a similarity between the God of Rahner and the Buddha-Nature of Suzuki and Hisamatsu, as has been pointed out in previous chapters.

However, as has been pointed out in previous chapters, one must not be quick to come to such a conclusion as the similarity between the Christian God and the Buddha-Nature. In traditional Thomistic terms, God is Subsistent Being while the Buddha-Nature, as understood by Suzuki and Hisamatsu, is "Oriental Nothingness" or Non-being. Self-reliance in Zen, as understood by Suzuki and Hisamatsu, is grounded in Oriental Nothingness. For Suzuki, the "self" of self-reliance is identified with the "cosmic unconscious" which is then identified with "no-mind" which is another way of speaking about "Nothingness." Hisamatsu affirms the same. Thus, there would not be a correspondence between Zen and Catholicism in regard to grace and self-reliance unless there was some similarity between the God of Catholicism and the Buddha Nature. At this point in our discussion, there does not seem to be any similarity in these "grounds" of Zen and Catholicism.

CHAPTER V

ZEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

This chapter is a discussion of the impact that Zen satori has upon the Zen Buddhist, and a description of the impact of what the Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen perceive as its corresponding phenomenon in Christianity upon the Christian. Some of the Roman Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen discuss this topic under the rubric: the psychological aspects of Zen and of Christian mysticism. However, this chapter is not limited to this one dimension. Other authors touch upon the same topic from a theological and an ascetical point of view. The bulk of what is said centers upon the "transformation" and/or "negation" of the ego and the nature of Zen consciousness and Christian consciousness. The first part of the chapter is a presentation of the approaches of the Roman Catholic authors, engaged in a meeting with Zen Buddhism, to the relation between Zen consciousness and Christian consciousness, followed by the approaches of Suzuki and Hisamatsu to Zen consciousness, and Rahner's approach to the Christian consciousness.

The Understanding of Christian and Zen
Consciousness according to Roman
Catholic Authors in Dialogue
with Zen

Enomiya-Lassalle describes Zen satori as a "great vision of essence." This vision is a clear and an undifferentiated vision. Christian mystical union is also described by Enomiya-Lassalle as a vision but he says that it differs from Zen satori insofar as it is a vision of the Trinity and retains the power of differentiation.¹ In order to attain this vision, a radical detachment is necessary. For the Christian this is a "detachment from all created things."² But this detachment is

no more radical . . . than that which enlightenment means and leads to. For enlightenment means to give up everything so thoroughly that only mere existence remains. One cannot go further in detachment.³

A major aspect of this detachment in Zen meditation is the "death of the ego." Enomiya-Lassalle develops this theme when he writes in regard to Zen meditation:

First of all we had to exclude all thoughts concerned with the ego. . . . In order to maintain in us the proper attitude of mind, we were urged time and time again: "Your ego must die! He who dies entirely will rise entirely; who dies partly will rise partly. A speck of an ego that you can call your own, even that does not exist."⁴

¹Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen-Meditation für Christen, schema.

²Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 73.

³Ibid., p. 74.

⁴Ibid., p. 15.

Not only must the ego die, it does not exist in the first place. Zen speaks of the existence of a self or ego, "neither in the meaning of an empirical 'I' nor in a deeper self."⁵ The "I" which is the subject of "I think" is a pure illusion. Freedom is not the destruction of the "I" but the emancipation from the illusion of the "I." This freedom is enlightenment which is the vision of essence in Zen. It is an

experiential realization of the absolute unity of all being in which there is neither 'I' independent in itself nor any kind of individual thing, nor any object."⁶

Hence, there is a quality of nondifferentiation in the Zen enlightenment.

Something similar happens, according to Enomiya-Lassalle, in Christian simple-meditation which has as its "object," not single, differentiated beings but absolute spirit. This "object" is not really an "object" because the "object" is God who is united with the subject who is man. The one meditating becomes one with that which is meditated upon. Enomiya-Lassalle reflects that "Christian simple-meditation is, of course, not the highest unity," for the dualism of "subject-object" still remains.⁷ However, in Christian mysticism, understood as infused con-

⁵Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation für Christen, pp. 147, 150.

⁶Ibid., p. 150.

⁷Ibid., p. 189.

templation, there is an experience of a "complete unity of subject and object" wherein:

. . . the soul is so deeply united with God that one loses all consciousness of his own existence.
 . . . One has become one with God. There is no subject-object tension and there is no longer any dualism. And only when this state has passed is the soul aware of its difference from God.⁸

Thus, for Enomiya-Lassalle, the Christian mystical experience, like Zen, is an experience of unity without any differentiation.

A major difference, according to Enomiya-Lassalle, between Zen and Christian experience is that the Zen experience does not go far enough. Zazen can bring the person to the point of unity, a point where the faculties of the soul, that is, intellect and will, are united. In Christian mysticism, this unity is directed to God.⁹

William Johnston also sees Zen meditation as leading to a unified personality. He writes:

Zen meditation is a process of unification in which the whole personality is harmonized in a oneness which reaches its climax with a complete absence of subject-object consciousness in satori.¹⁰

According to Johnston, the same is true of Christian mysticism. "Both promote a kind of psychic wholeness and unification."¹¹ The process is also similar, that is, a kind

⁸Ibid.

⁹Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Way to Enlightenment, pp. 94-95.

¹⁰Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., p. 76.

of "vertical thinking" in which one centers down to the core of his being, to the center of the soul.¹² The difference lies, and here Johnston is different from Enomiya-Lassalle, in the method of inducing this condition. In Zen, the method is artificial. It includes sitting, breathing, and the koan. In Christian mysticism, it is faith and love for Christ, nurtured for years, until something happens which is not separate from this faith and love but is "organically" related to it. In Christianity it is love that unifies, a love which arises out of meditation on Scripture and the life of Christ. There is nothing like this in Zen.¹³

Both the Zen and Christian experiences, according to Johnston, involve a detachment from everything.¹⁴ It is this doctrine of detachment that is least in fashion today in the so-called Christian West.¹⁵ For Johnston, detachment is a key practice in Zen wherein "one must be detached from everything, even from oneself."¹⁶ It is this seeming lack of personality, this denial of self, this non-self condition which especially disturbs most Western

¹²Ibid., pp. 66, 76.

¹³William Johnston, "Zen and Christian Contemplation," Review of Religious 29, 5 (September 1970): 701; Johnston, The Stillpoint, pp. 76-77.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 701.

¹⁵Johnston, Monchanin-Information, p. 3.

¹⁶Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 17.

people.¹⁷ Johnston responds to this attitude by following Merton who Johnston says, "maintained strongly that the Zen non-self condition was not a denial of personality but a rejection of the empirical ego and a search for the true self."¹⁸ Thus, Johnston is aware of the care that one must have when interpreting Zen descriptions such as loss of self. In this matter it is easy for a Westerner to impose his own Weltanschauung. If he does do this he will miss the center of Zen. This misunderstanding of the loss of self comes from a point of view which would also be misleading in regard to the core of Christian mysticism. Johnston writes:

The highest point of mysticism is reached not in the experience that "I know and love God," not in any I-Thou experience but in the experience that "God lives in me."¹⁹

This Christian experience follows a kenotic pattern which is also present in Zen.²⁰ He that would save his life must lose it. Johnston, however, warns that it is precisely here that the Christian manner of speaking is closest to Zen terminology. Hence, the necessary distinctions must be made

¹⁷William Johnston, "The Notion of Man in Zen," Studia Missionalia 19 (Rome, 1970): 98.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁹William Johnston, "Buddhists and Christians Meet," The Eastern Buddhist, New Series, 3, 1 (June 1970): 143-44.

²⁰Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 91.

between Christian and Zen experiences.²¹ Zen satori, according to Johnston, is nonhistorical, undifferentiated, face-to-face presence to reality.²² It is a "total silence before the tremendous mystery of existence and its source."²³ The Christian experience moves from the silence to Word.²⁴

Graham approaches the theme of Christian and Zen consciousness when he asks the question: "What is the 'me' to whom things 'happen'?"²⁵ For "it is only when we consider ourselves as an object of thought, as 'me' rather than 'I' that this question arises."²⁶ The 'I' as subject and the 'me' as object are separated. The self or ego, conscious of itself, is a subject-object duality. This duality pertains not only to ourselves, but also to other people and to God.²⁷ The ego, in its duality, is that by which we function and is also the source of our distress, our suffering, or alienation from ourselves, from others, and from the world. Graham writes:

Deep distress inevitably occurs whenever we identify what may be called our true self (the "I") with the assertive ego (the often all-too-demanding

²¹Ibid., p. 92; The Stillpoint, p. 148.

²²Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 33.

²³Johnston, The Eastern Buddhist, p. 145.

²⁴Ibid., p. 145.

²⁵Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 23.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 24.

"me"): when, in other words, we allow our lives to be immersed in a private sea of feelings, perceptions, desires, and aversions, whether physical or mental.²⁸

This condition of being split "can be a more effective block to direct contact with reality, and therefore to union with God, than vice itself."²⁹

What is the cause of this division? Graham suggests that:

The duality we experience, real or only apparent, between the conscious ego and our true self, is always ready to declare itself. According to Buddhist doctrine and the Catholic Christian may readily concur, what chiefly accounts for the division within is a grasping desire or craving, either for what we do not yet have, or, having, fear to lose.³⁰

To be ego-centered, to have one's own way is the major source of our troubles.³¹

Catholicism is at one with Zen in extolling the self-less life; but selflessness is an attitude of the human spirit resulting from its surrender to God, the Ultimate Self, not a denial of the existence of the creaturely ego.³²

It is not the ego as such which gets in the way but rather consciousness of the ego by the ego which is an obstacle to direct contact with reality. "The aim is to become aware of immediate reality with nothing, not even a thought intervening."³³ Zen enlightenment involves this direct

²⁸Ibid., p. 25.

²⁹Ibid., p. 47.

³⁰Ibid., p. 43.

³¹Ibid., p. 44.

³²Ibid., p. 30.

³³Ibid., p. 51.

contact with reality. It is a nonattachment which bespeaks the paradox of both enjoying and experiencing and not being involved.³⁴

Graham suggests:

The result of such an 'enlightenment' is to remove the sense of alienation from the natural world, from other people, from ourselves, and consequently from God, which lies at the root of our distresses.³⁵

Enlightenment involves a directness and simplicity which is central to the Zen attitude. An enlightened person looks at things as they are. He does not impose his own a priori images upon them. Graham describes this condition as unselfconsciousness in which there is a high degree of awareness without selfpreoccupation.³⁶ This is a seeing things in their "suchness." Enlightenment or satori is described by Graham:

Now satori, I submit, is the disappearance of the self-conscious me before the full realization of the unself-conscious I. One does not, let it be stressed, become newly aware of the I since that would transform it into the me which has dropped from consciousness. Instead one becomes aware of the "is-ness," in which the I is included, though without differentiation.³⁷

Satori, according to Graham, is very close to the experience of God who is the "realization" of our true selves in an unselfconscious manner.

³⁴Ibid., p. 44.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 33-34.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 18, 79.

³⁷Ibid., p. 40.

Catholicism expresses this fulfillment in terms of God being glorified. But so far as the individual is concerned, he gives glory to God by removing the impediments to God's self-manifestation within the human spirit; a process which necessarily brings with it the emergence of the true created self.³⁸

Thomas Merton is well aware that a "transcendent experience" for the Christian is centered upon a transcendent and personal center who is the Christ while in Zen the "center may, with qualification, be described as "non-personal" or better, the Void.³⁹ Zen attempts to get back "to the pure unarticulated and unexplained ground of direct experience . . . of life itself."⁴⁰ Following is a description of the many questions which Merton raises in regard to what he calls the transcendent experience or at other times the consciousness of the Christian and the Zen Buddhist.

In his writings about transcendent experience in Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism, Merton raises a question about the word "experience" in Zen. This question leads into the center of Merton's discussion of the ego. The word "experience" when used in reference to the Zen

³⁸Ibid., pp., 86-87.

³⁹Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, pp. 74, 7; Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 42. Merton finds no evidence for a personal center in Zen though he recognizes, with serious qualifications, that the concept of the Buddha-Nature might be analogous to a personal center. He does question, however, the idea that Zen is simply uninterested in external-historical reality, a reality which is closely related to the idea of a personal center.

⁴⁰Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 36.

consciousness may give rise to a basic misunderstanding of Zen. It may be thought that the "I" as a "subject" has an experience which involves some "object." Merton writes: "To suggest that it is 'an experience' which a 'subject' is capable of 'having' is to use terms that contradict all the implications of Zen."⁴¹ Why this is the case is pointed out by Merton in another essay where he asks:

Are we any longer able to speak of an experience when the subject of the experience is not a limited, well-defined, empirical subject?⁴²

Zen involves a certain quality of consciousness or of awareness.⁴³ It might be thought that this quality pertains to the ego and that Zen is a development of the ego. This interpretation would not be uncommon for a Westerner. In fact, it would be characteristic since Western thought, even where it renounces the "I," always begins with the "I." Even for the Christian for whom the "I" needs to be transformed, there is a focus on the empirical ego-subject which is transformed. The "I," though changed, remains.⁴⁴ In Zen, however, it is precisely this empirical ego that is the source and center of every illusion. The transformation is not from "I" to "I" such that the transformed "I" is

⁴¹Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 13.

⁴²Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 74.

⁴³Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. ix.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 223-24.

still fundamentally the empirical ego. Merton suggests:

It is not the empirical self which "possesses" prajna-wisdom, or owns "an unconscious" as one might have a cellar in one's house. In reality, the conscious belongs to the transcendental unconscious, is possessed by it, and carries out its work, or it should do so.⁴⁵

The empirical ego does not have anything nor is it changed into anything other. Rather, the empirical ego itself is "had" by that other which Merton calls "transcendental unconscious." This is not found only in Zen. Merton finds some parallel in Christianity, especially in John the Evangelist and John of the Cross.

According to Merton, there is an exact psychological correspondence though a theological difference between the mystical night of John of the Cross and the Void or emptiness or sunyata. The "night" of John of the Cross opens into the divine while the Void of Zen is the natural ground of being. In both cases "there must be a 'death' of that ego-identity or self-consciousness which is constituted by a calculating and desiring ego."⁴⁶ It would seem that, for Merton, the starting point is still the ego. However, in another place, he suggests that:

St. John's expression, the 'light which enlightens every man coming into this world' (John 1:9) seems to correspond pretty closely to the idea of prajna and of Hui Neng's 'unconscious.'⁴⁷

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 242.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 25.

The empirical ego, in other words, becomes "one with God's own light."⁴⁸ This still would emphasize a transformation of the ego--the empirical ego--to God. In another passage Merton seems to make the transition from a Western to a Zen "awareness." He points out:

We are transformed in the prajna light, we "become" that light, which in fact we "are." We see the light in everything. In such a situation, the presence of external objects and concepts in our mind is irrelevant, for our knowledge of them is no longer attained by thinking about them as object. We know them in a vastly different way, as we now know ourselves not in ourselves, not in our own mind, but in prajna, or as a Christian would say, in God.⁴⁹

The empirical ego is not destroyed nor is external or material reality excluded. Rather the way of "seeing" is changed. The enlightened person is aware or, better, the unconscious as manifest and conscious in the enlightened person is aware. "Prajna is not self-realization, but realization pure and simple, beyond subject and object."⁵⁰ At another point Merton speaks of the unconscious awareness in terms of Being. He writes:

Zen insight is not our awareness, but Being's awareness of itself in us. . . . It is a recognition that the whole world is aware of itself in me, and that 'I' am no longer my individual and limited self, still less a disembodied soul, but that my 'identity' is to be sought not in that separation from all that is, but in oneness (indeed, 'convergence') with all that is.⁵¹

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 27.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 28.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 17-18.

The Zen insight involves not only a oneness with all that is, but it is also an "act of being which transcends time and space." In fact, it involves an "awareness of full spiritual reality, and therefore the realization of the emptiness of all limited or particularized realities."⁵² Thus, Zen consciousness or the realization of the "Buddha-Mind" is not a rejection of the world, of temporality, of particularity in favor of oneness, but an affirmation of both oneness and of manyness. In regard to the ego, Merton says that:

Nirvana is not the consciousness of an ego that is aware of itself as having crossed over to 'the other shore' . . . but the Absolute Ground-Consciousness of the Void, in which there are no shores.⁵³

It is the death of the ego-consciousness which is a direct seeing into the "ordinary."

Another aspect of consciousness in which Merton finds a parallel between Zen and Christianity is the parallel between the purity of heart sought by the Desert Fathers of Egypt and the nonattachment of the Zen monks. In his initial correspondence with D. T. Suzuki, Merton and Suzuki discussed this parallel. A relationship between paradise, innocence, purity of heart on the Christian side, and emptiness and nonattachment on the Zen side is sug-

⁵²Ibid., p. 17.

⁵³Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 76.

gested. Purity of heart, innocence, and paradise are a complete emptying of self.⁵⁴ However, they are not a goal or ultimate end, but only a step toward the goal. They are not yet heaven. In fact, the innocence, etc. are simply a return to the beginning, to the innocence lost by Adam. Now the seeker is ready to begin in the work toward the ultimate end which is the Kingdom of God.

Merton takes these ideas on "purity of heart" from Cassian. He recognizes that while they may suggest the "emptiness" of Zen, they still maintain:

. . . that the supreme consciousness resides in a distinct heart which is pure and which is therefore ready and even worthy to receive a vision of God. It is still very aware of a 'pure,' distinct and separate self-consciousness.⁵⁵

Merton goes further than Cassian and closer to Zen through his reflections on Eckhart whom Merton believes gives "a fuller and truer expression of Zen in Christian experience."⁵⁶ Eckhart begins with Cassian's purity of heart insofar as he frees himself from all things and actions, inward and outward in order to be a fitting dwelling for God. Not only does this correspond to Cassian's purity of heart but also to the idea of "spiritual virginity" as found in some Christian mystics. There is, however, much more for Eckhart who suggests that our poverty be such that there is not even

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 120-21.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁶Ibid.

a place for God. Reserving a place for God would be to maintain a duality. But Eckhart, according to Merton, gives expression to a "Zen-like equation of God as infinite abyss and ground (cf. Sunyata), with the true being of the self grounded in him." Merton continues:

Hence it is that Eckhart believes: only when there is no self left as a "place" in which God acts, only when God acts purely in Himself, do we at last recover our "true self" (which is in Zen terms "no-self").⁵⁷

This is a perfect poverty. Man is without God and has no place for God to work. This poverty is beyond purity of heart. Is it the kingdom of God? If the "kingdom of God" means unity with God, then the poverty which has no place for God yet is utter unity with God is that kingdom.

Lest one think that this poverty is a rejection of the earth, Merton writes:

It is only in this highest unity that we finally discover the dignity and importance even of our "earthly self" which does not exist apart from it, but in it and by it.⁵⁸

The "radical transformation" does not take place, for Buddhist or Christian, apart from ordinary everyday human existence which is full of confusion and suffering. Rather than explaining or transcending this condition in order to avoid it, both Buddhist and Christian recognize it as in-explainable and as something we cannot control, yet as a very dimension of our ego-identity and concrete, empirical

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 12.

existence. Merton concludes that, for both Buddhism and Christianity,

the only thing to do about it is to plunge right into the middle of contradiction and confusion in order to be transformed by what Zen calls the 'Great Death' and Christianity calls 'dying and rising with Christ.'⁵⁹

This last image is similar to another Pauline phrase, the "death of the old man." This image is discussed by Merton in the context of the development of the Christian personality and also in reference to the concreteness and ordinariness of Zen. After suggesting the interpretation of Buddhist "emptiness" as a complete negation of all personality and Christian purity of heart as the supreme fulfillment of personality, Merton points out that the Christian often identifies personality with the illusory ego which is not the true Christian person. In Zen, once one has undergone Zen training, one finds himself to be the ordinary "Tom, Dick or Harry" he had been all along, which is far from a negation of personality but rather an absolute affirmation of it in its concreteness. It is this Zen awareness that Merton finds similar to the Christian "death of the old man," and discovery of the new man who was there all along, at least as a possibility.⁶⁰

For the Christian, the discovery of the new man, the being one with Christ, is to live in Christ. Merton

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 51.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 117-18.

wonders whether "what Dr. Suzuki had said about 'emptiness' ought not to help us to go deeper than we usually do into this doctrine of our mystical unity and purity in Christ."⁶¹ Is not death to self and life "in Christ" a "dying" and "emptying" of the old self? Is not the being moved by the grace of Christ an action "out-of-emptiness," that is, deriving from God the mystery of freedom and love, rather than something springing from our own spiritual egotistical self-interest?⁶² Merton points to a response to these questions when he says that the Christian experience is focused not in the individual, separate, limited, temporal ego but rather in Christ or the Holy Spirit "within" this self and that for Zen the Self is not the ego-self but the Void.⁶³ This is possibly the most fruitful point of contact between Zen and Christianity which Merton developed. It is derived from the well-known passage from St. Paul's letter to the Phillipians:

In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:
 His state was divine
 yet he did not cling
 to his equality with God
 but emptied himself
 to assume the condition of a slave,
 and become as men are;
 he was humbler yet,
 even to accepting death,
 death on a cross.
 But God raised him high
 and gave him the name
 which is above all other names.⁶⁴

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 118-19.

⁶²Ibid., p. 119.

⁶³Ibid., p. 74.

⁶⁴Phil. 2: 5-9.

Merton focuses on two aspects of this early Christian hymn, namely, the participation in the mind of Christ, and secondly, the kenosis of Christ. The two are interrelated. When Merton speaks of transcendent experience he points out that, for the Christian, this experience is nothing more nor less than a participation in the mind of Christ which itself is the selfemptying.⁶⁵ This relationship is derived by Merton from a discussion of the relation between wisdom and the cross.⁶⁶

According to St. Paul in 1 Cor. 1:17-23, there are two kinds of wisdom: one a dialectical wisdom, the other a matter of paradox and experience which transcends the reach of reason. The attainment of the latter involves a liberation from a servile dependence on the former. This liberation is accomplished by the "word of the cross" which is a source of power, the transforming power of Christ. The hearing of the "word of the cross" which is the "foolishness of God" is more than a simple acceptance of a dogma that Christ died for our sins:

It means to be "nailed to the Cross with Christ", so that the ego-self is no longer the principle of our deepest actions, which now proceed from Christ living in us. . . . To receive the word of the Cross means the acceptance of a complete self-emptying, a Kenosis, in union with the self-emptying of Christ "obedient unto death."⁶⁷

⁶⁵Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 75.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 55ff.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 56.

This is the mind of Christ which may be called a Christian consciousness. Merton writes:

It is a kenotic transformation, an emptying of all the contents of the ego-consciousness to become a void in which the light of God or the glory of God, the full radiation of the infinite reality of His Being and Love are manifested.⁶⁸

Merton continues:

The Buddhist enters into the self-emptying and enlightenment of the Buddha as the Christian enters into the self-emptying (crucifixion) and glorification (resurrection and ascension) of Christ.⁶⁹

The Zen enlightenment, according to Merton, is not a recognition or seeing the Buddha, but rather being the Buddha.⁷⁰ It involves a

. . . unifying intuition of the basic unity of subject and object in being. . . . This basic unity is not an abstract concept but being itself - charged with the dynamism of spirit and love.⁷¹

Zen is not analogous to wiping a mirror clean. It is rather a "non-seeing, a non-contemplation in which precisely it is realized that the 'mirror' or original mind (of prajna and emptiness) is actually a nonmirror, and 'no-mind.'"⁷² Quoting Suzuki, Merton expresses this in another way. He writes:

Zen cannot be grasped by mere introspection, still less by dreaming. Suzuki says: "Zen

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 75.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 5.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 66-67.

⁷²Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 31.

must be seized with bare hands, with no gloves on." It required a real alertness and effort, and one's entire, undivided attention . . . to life in its concrete, existential reality, here and now. The Zen Masters would doubtless like the maxim age quod agis. They seek Zen in the ordinary conduct of everyday life.⁷³

While there are meeting points in a variety of places between Zen and Christianity according to Merton, he does not suggest that one of them is this direct, bare-handed "experience" of reality, though he does not see the Christian experience as apart from the ordinary human condition.

Peter Kreeft points out that a radical transformation or a "new birth" is demanded by both Christianity and Zen.⁷⁴ This "new birth" involves a radical change insofar as the self does not live out of itself but out of something else. This something else "is some sort of all-encompassing, transcendent-yet-immanent absolute."⁷⁵ It is neither abstract nor particular but rather a "concrete universal."⁷⁶ This "new birth" does not mean perfection. Rather it is an unselfconscious confidence in self and in life.⁷⁷ This unselfconsciousness would seem to be a return to infancy. Zen, it is suggested, is a regression to pre-ego-consciousness and Christianity is becoming as little children. The point is not that one regresses, but rather that one goes beyond self-

⁷³Ibid., p. 222.

⁷⁴Kreeft, p. 519.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 520.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 521-22.

consciousness. It is not a return to childhood but a relation to others--things and/or persons--in themselves and not as object.⁷⁸

After asking the question, "Is individuality real or illusory, a value or a disvalue, a glory or an obstacle?" Kreeft responds by asking: "Can there be an ego without egotism?"⁷⁹ While Buddhism, it seems, answers "no" and Christianity answers "yes," Kreeft attempts to find some "individuality" in Zen and some "identity" in Christianity. In regard to the former, he suggests that the Zen Masters are highly individual characters.⁸⁰ However, this is not all. Kreeft sees a "hidden ego in satori." There can be no experience called satori unless there is someone to be the experiencer. The ego is not as much lost as the individual is un-ego-conscious. This seems to be a contradiction in Zen. Kreeft says that "what is (truly) experienced in satori is the trans-individuality, the universality, the infinity, even, of consciousness-as-such, which included what I usually call 'my' consciousness."⁸¹

Christianity seems to place great emphasis on my individual ego. Yet "my true self is my participation in God" where "all finite egos are transcended and included: preserved, transformed, redeemed, spiritualized, eternalized,

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 523.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 529, 530.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 530.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 530f.

realized."⁸²

Kreeft attempts to resolve the contradiction between the Buddhist position (the ego is an illusion created by egotism) and the Christian position (egotism is a disease of the real ego). Each position contains the other though there is a different emphasis in each. Christianity can recognize that the diseased ego is not my real ego but an illusion caused by desire. Zen can recognize that while this diseased ego is an illusion, there is a hidden real ego beyond the false one,⁸³ e.g., Kreeft considers death. For the Christian, since the ego is real, death is real. But Zen seems to say that since the ego is not ultimately real, neither is death. But death, functionally, is like satori: "to unveil, to remove the ego from standing in its own true light."⁸⁴

A major question in the Roman Catholic-Zen Buddhist dialogue is that of the relation between a Zen consciousness and a Christian consciousness. Central to the discussion of this question is an attitude toward the ego. Enomiya-Lassalle describes both the Zen and Christian consciousness as a vision, the former as an undifferentiated vision of essence and the latter as a vision of God which remains differentiated. Essential to this vision is a radical detach-

⁸²Ibid., p. 532.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 532-33.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 536.

ment which involves the death of the ego. In Zen the ego is considered to be an illusion. Thus, Zen satori does not involve the destruction of the ego but rather a freedom from the illusion of an ego in an undifferentiated unity of all. Enomiya-Lassalle distinguishes two different phases in Christian mysticism. In simple meditation, the unity achieved is not the highest unity and hence retains a duality. Infused contemplation, however, like Zen satori, involves an undifferentiated unity. Johnston sees both Zen and Christian mysticism as precipitating a unity of personality through a process of vertical thinking. However, the methods used are different. In Christianity love is the unifying force while in Zen artificial methods, such as the koan, are used. Detachment is essential, that is, a denial of self which is specifically a rejection of the empirical ego in a death-resurrection pattern. Both Zen satori and Christian mysticism encounter silence in a direct, undifferentiated manner. Christian mysticism does not stop here but a word arises from the silence. There is a oneness and a diversity at the core of Christian mysticism whereas oneness is characteristic of the Zen consciousness. Graham finds a nondual (not-one, not-two) relationship between the "I" (subject) and the "me" (object) in both Zen and Roman Catholicism. Both traditions point to a direct contact with reality, that is, to an awareness without any selfpreoccupation. The problem is not so much the existence of the ego,

but the ego's consciousness of itself. For Graham, satori is very close to the "experience of God." Thomas Merton also describes the death of the ego in terms of a direct (beyond subject and object) seeing into the ordinary which affirms both oneness and manyness. He distinguishes between the empirical ego and the transcendental unconsciousness (the "void" in Zen and the "night" of John of the Cross and the "light" of John the Evangelist). The empirical ego is not the source of activity nor is it that which is transformed. Rather, it itself is a dimension of the transcendental unconscious. The realization of this may be called nonattachment (Great Death in Zen; Dying and Rising in Christ in Christianity). Merton relates Zen emptiness to the Christian kenotic experience which experience is a participation in the mind of Christ which itself is a self-emptying. Kreeft, finally, speaks of a new birth in both Zen and Christianity. This new birth means that the self no longer lives out of itself, that the ego does not stand in its own light but rather that there is present an unself-conscious confidence in life. Both individuality and identity are found in Zen and Christianity.

Zen Consciousness: Suzuki and Hisamatsu

The second part of this chapter is a presentation of Zen consciousness in the light of the approaches of D. T. Suzuki and S. Hisamatsu. According to Hisamatsu, a fundamental expression of Zen is to be found in the saying attributed to Bodhidharma: "Directly pointing to man's Mind,

Awakening his (Original-) Nature, thereby actualizing his Buddhahood."⁸⁵ This awakening is called satori. It is the purpose of this section to point to the meaning of satori, especially in terms of the Self. This will be done first from the writing of Hisamatsu and then from the writing of Suzuki.

In an essay on Oriental Nothingness, Hisamatsu writes that the topic of his discussion is not only the essence of Zen but also that "it is the living experience of Self-Realization which constitutes the concrete basis of (his) own religion and philosophy."⁸⁶ The Self of the Self-realization is Oriental Nothingness which Hisamatsu also calls Mind. This Mind or Self which is realized is not outside of the human. It is an (not on) objective or subjective other. The Self is Myself. It is Mind which is Buddha, not the Buddha who is other than I am but rather the Buddha who I myself am. Hisamatsu writes:

The Buddha of which I am speaking, however, is not a subject in the sense of transcending and controlling me, but is a subject in the sense that Buddha is I, Myself. While the transcending, controlling Buddha is to be called an objective-subject, it can not be spoken of as being a pure subject. In contrast to this, the Buddha which is I, Myself, is to be called a subjective-subject, and is a pure, absolute subject.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 22.

⁸⁶Hisamatsu, "Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," p. 65.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 89.

This Self which is Buddha is the Mind of the phrase quoted above: "Directly pointing to man's Mind, Awakening his (Original-) Nature, thereby actualizing his Buddhahood."

Satori is the realization of this Self-Nature, rather than the fulfillment of the "naive" self (i.e., the self which is ordinarily thought of when the word "self" is used), or of a self which is other than Myself whether that other is an object or a subject. When Buddhahood is actualized, the Self or Mind is realized.⁸⁸

Buddhism is often interpreted in the West as an absolute denial of the self. The following exposition of the thinking of Suzuki on this topic shows that this interpretation is not exactly the case. First of all, Suzuki affirms that there must be "some sort of self."⁸⁹ He argues that human community implies morality which implies responsibility which itself implies individuality which, in turn, implies the existence of a self.⁹⁰ Often he uses the words self, ego, and individual synonymously, though each word has a different flavor. "Individual" is used in contrast with group. The "ego" is psychological. "Self" has moral, psychological, and religious connotations.⁹¹ These words

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 88091.

⁸⁹Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 58.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 30.

are used synonymously unless otherwise noted.

While speaking of enlightenment Suzuki distinguishes between an absolute ego and a relative ego. The relative ego is what is usually called the psychological ego. The absolute ego is that which is both beyond and within the relative ego. Suzuki writes:

Enlightenment consists in seeing into the meaning of life as the interplay of the relative ego with the absolute ego. In other words, enlightenment is seeing the absolute as reflected in the relative ego and acting through it. Or we may express the idea in this way: the absolute ego creates the relative ego in order to see itself reflected in it, that is, in the relative ego.⁹²

To clarify this and also to point to the existence of a Self or ego, Suzuki contrasts the analytic and synthetic approaches to the understanding of Zen. The analytic method which starts with the transiency of all things ends up by denying the ego. It stops at negation.⁹³ Suzuki continues:

I began with the analytic method. This analysis stops at negation; it is the annihilation of desires and the dissolution of existing objects. . . . We must go beyond this, into synthesis. By the synthetic method all that we have killed, dissected, and reduced to mere lifelessness is resuscitated and resurrected. Analysis has turned the living object into a corpse; the corpse must be revived, and the resurrection is brought about by synthesis. This is the great affirmation. To say there is no ego, there is no Atman - this is not enough. We must go one

⁹²D. T. Suzuki, Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 41.

⁹³Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 45.

step beyond and say that there is Atman, but this Atman is not on the plane of the relative but on the plane of the absolute.⁹⁴

This affirmation and negation are not separate aspects of a process. They are part of a whole going on every moment of existence. Suzuki finds a parallel to this in the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ which is one event, also going on every moment.⁹⁵ The aspect of negation can be spoken of in terms of denial of the ego or selfdenial.⁹⁶ Suzuki says this is

. . . like climbing up to the end of a pole one hundred feet long and yet being urged to climb on and on until you have to execute a desperate leap, utterly disregarding your existential safety.⁹⁷

It is also described as thinking oneself to be at the bottom of a deep well and having the one thought of escape.⁹⁸ The leap from the pole--an utter denial of self--is itself the very affirmation of Self or as Suzuki calls it, finding "yourself safely on the 'full-blown lotus pedestal.'"⁹⁹

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 51.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 17.

⁹⁷Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 50.

⁹⁸Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, p. 23.

⁹⁹Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 51.

In this discussion in which there is a movement from crucifixion and death to resurrection or from negation to affirmation, there is still a duality: that of affirmation and negation. The affirmation may be interpreted as being conditioned by a negation, that is, as related to the negation. In other words, the affirmation has, as its necessary prerequisite, the previous negation. This kind of affirmation is relative and hence remains in the realm of duality. In Zen the affirmation is also absolute and unconditional. It is not simply escape from negation. Suzuki tries to transcend the duality while not negating it:

There is something in Zen that frees us from conditions and at the same time gives us a certain firm foothold, which however, is not a foothold in a relative sense. The Zen master endeavors to take away all footholds from the disciple which he has ever had since his first appearance on earth, and then to supply him with one that is really no foothold.¹⁰⁰

This foothold which is no foothold, this absolute affirmation is called satori, the awakening to the True Self, the Seeing into one's Self-Nature and thereby actualizing one's Buddhahood. It is not so much becoming someone different but realizing who I really am which itself is often called a new birth and involves a new view of life.

For Suzuki, satori is the beginning and the end of Zen. It is the whole of Zen.¹⁰¹ To speak of satori is to

¹⁰⁰Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 68.

¹⁰¹Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, p. 23.

speak of the Buddha-nature, Self-nature, Formlessness, Emptiness, Suchness, Mind, and also Unconscious. Each of these words points to a Reality which is beyond the psychological yet is also the very foundation of the psychological. Thus, when one speaks of Zen consciousness, the word consciousness must not be understood merely from a psychological ground. Suzuki writes:

The awakening itself is a simple psychological event, but its significance goes deep down to the basic make-up of human and cosmic consciousness.¹⁰²

This "ground" is also called the Unconscious by Suzuki.¹⁰³ It is not the psychological unconscious but the Unconscious which is sunyata. This Unconscious is not an object as such but is what has been described by Hisamatsu as the subjective-subject.

Suzuki, further, describes some characteristics of satori. The first characteristic is the "irrationality" of satori. This quality may strike a Western mind in a perjorative manner, precisely because of a Western idolization of rationality. To understand irrationality in terms of its opposition to rationality is to be involved in a duality. Satori does not oppose rationality. It is, rather, the very ground of it. The point Suzuki wishes to make when he de-

¹⁰²Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 247.

¹⁰³Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, pp. 10f.

scribes satori as irrational is that satori cannot be produced by simply thinking oneself to it, by reasoning to it as the conclusion to a syllogism. Suzuki writes:

Satori does not consist in producing a certain premeditated condition by intensely thinking of it. It is acquiring a new point of view for the looking at things.¹⁰⁴

Thus, satori is not so much rational or irrational as it is a new point of view. Religiously this may be described as a new birth.¹⁰⁵

Suzuki describes the second characteristic of satori as intuitive insight. The knowledge involved here is not knowledge through a medium such as a concept. It is mediumless perception which is called prajna.¹⁰⁶ It is not only knowledge of something universal but also, at the same time, knowledge of the individual or particular aspect of existence.¹⁰⁷

The third characteristic of satori is its authoritativeness. Insofar as satori reaches the so-called bed-rock of existence, "the most interior part of consciousness,"¹⁰⁸ Reality itself, the knowledge is final and hence authoritative. It cannot be refuted by logic and can only

¹⁰⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 95.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 54.

¹⁰⁷Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, p. 35.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

be validated by personal experience.¹⁰⁹

A fourth characteristic of satori which flows from its authoritativeness is affirmation. Zen satori affirms that all things are as they are without duality or relativity. This has been called "Suchness" which is a grand affirmation: "The mountains are really mountains."¹¹⁰

A fifth characteristic of satori is that in satori there is a sense of the Beyond. The Beyond does not refer to an Other, whether that be God, the Absolute or a Person. The Zen sense of the Beyond is described as breaking the shell of my individuality. It is not so much the loss of individuality as it is the finding that individuality melts "away into something indescribable, something which is of quite a different order from what I am accustomed to."¹¹¹

A sixth characteristic of satori is its ordinariness. It is not an extraordinary happening but rather "is experience in connection with any ordinary occurrence in one's daily life."¹¹² "Zen," in other words, "is your everyday mind."¹¹³ Suzuki writes in another place:

Zen is our "ordinary mindedness;" that is to say, there is in Zen nothing supernatural or unusual or highly speculative that transcends our everyday life. When you feel sleepy you retire; when you are hungry, you eat, just as much as the

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 35-36.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 36.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 38.

¹¹³Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 97.

fowls of the air and the lilies of the field,
taking "no thought for your life, what ye shall
eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your
body, what ye shall put on."¹¹⁴

Suzuki describes this "ordinary mindedness" as directness.
Zen deals with life as it flows.¹¹⁵ Suzuki says in another
place: "Zen is taught to be something in direct contact
with our daily life."¹¹⁶

Another characteristic of satori, a feeling of
exaltation, seems to contradict what has just been said.
This feeling is the opposite of restriction and dependence
which arise from dualities. Satori releases one from these
oppositions and brings with it a "quiet feeling of self-
contentment" which is its exaltation.¹¹⁷

An eighth characteristic of satori is its abrupt-
ness. Satori does not come upon one gradually but suddenly.
That satori is actualized in this manner is characteristic
of the Hui-neng school of Zen.¹¹⁸

Finally, Suzuki maintains that Zen awareness does
not involve absolute identification such that all becomes
merely one. Satori is not characterized by identity.

¹¹⁴ Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 131.

¹¹⁵ Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 75.

¹¹⁶ Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 219.

¹¹⁷ Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series,
p. 39.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 39.

Rather, the identity once reached must be broken up, as it were, in a return to the relative level. This relativity is not relative in the usual sense of the word. Suzuki says that it is:

. . . the borderland between the conscious level and the unconscious. Once this level is touched, one's ordinary consciousness becomes infused with the tidings of the unconscious. This is the moment when the finite mind realizes that it is rooted in the infinite.¹¹⁹

This realization is spoken of as "differentiation undifferentiated."¹²⁰ It is prajna-intuition in which:

. . . the whole is intuited together with its parts; here the undifferentiated whole comes along with its infinitely differentiated, individualized parts. . . . The whole is not lost in its parts, nor does individuation lose sight of the whole.¹²¹

Thus, satori is not merely undifferentiated intuition but rather differentiation undifferentiated.

In conclusion, Zen satori, according to Suzuki, is an absolute purity, that is, it goes beyond purity and impurity.¹²² In other words, Zen purity is sunyata or emptiness which is the Buddha-Nature, which is always there, being realized in the one who sees. It is here in the Buddha-Nature where the depths of the Zen consciousness is to be found.

¹¹⁹Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 47.

¹²⁰Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 273.

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 272-73.

¹²²Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 56.

Rahner on Christian Consciousness

The third section of this chapter is a presentation of Rahner's approach to Christian consciousness. The main thrust of this part is to delineate the lines of what Rahner sees as a basic Christian attitude, especially as it is manifest in Christian experience. This is an attempt to elucidate the main elements of Rahner's spiritual theology of which John T. Carmody says: "The heart of Karl Rahner's spiritual theology is Christian religious experience."¹²³ This section describes the core and the various elements of this experience.

At the root of all Christian belief (consciousness) is the awareness that the God who is distant and inconceivable is also near. Christianity is the assent of the whole Church to the absolute mystery which we call God, the mystery as admitting us to its own identity and as imparting itself to us in history.¹²⁴ This "vision of God" is promised to us as our fulfillment which fulfillment is present now in grace. The vision itself is that the God who is incomprehensible mystery, who is essentially inconceivable, is imparted to us immediately.¹²⁵ Rahner writes:

¹²³John T. Carmody, "Rahner's Spiritual Theology," America 123, 13 (October 31, 1970): 345.

¹²⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 60.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 15; also Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 108.

It is in the immediate present vision of God that the incomprehensible mystery of God is most forcibly evident. God is no longer simply and solely God of the aloof and distant mystery. But as the God of the absolute proximity of self-communication he is indeed the God whose name is the holy mystery.¹²⁶

Rahner puts this in another way when he writes that "God's distance is but the incomprehensibility of his all-penetrating nearness."¹²⁷

Thus, at the center of Christian consciousness is an immediate vision of God. The content of the vision is the incomprehensibility of a God who communicates himself to man (God as near or immanent) as grace. There are two aspects of this realization. The first is that "Christianity recognizes that man knows God only when he is reduced to silence and adoration by the experience of this mystery" and the second is that "Christianity knows that this mystery permeates its own existence as the ultimate reality of all and as the truth of truths."¹²⁸ Christianity involves the awareness of the silent abyss in our midst, the experience of the God who is far and near, "the experience that the abyss protects, that pure silence is tender, that the distance is home,"¹²⁹ that the incomprehensible God is Father.¹³⁰

¹²⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, p. 61.

¹²⁷Rahner, Grace in Freedom, p. 200.

¹²⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 61.

¹²⁹Rahner, Grace in Freedom, p. 197.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 197.

This union with and vision of God must not be seen as completely other-worldly. When one thinks of God and world as two totally independent realities in such a way that to be in one is to deny the other (as is the possibility when grace is articulated in terms of the two-story metaphor), then remoteness from the world and nearness to God are often seen as interchangeable. Rahner maintains that this is not the case when he writes:

We must simply try to realize clearly and soberly that a spiritual union with God cannot be regarded as something which grows in inverse proportion to the belonging to the material world.¹³¹

Rahner takes this a step further when he points out that not only are nearness to God and being in the world not contradictory but that the former is mediated through the latter. He writes:

The Christian experience of the sheer and absolute transcendence of God is achieved: not by rising above and leaving behind the finite but precisely by being mediated through the finite, the 'world.' It attains to this 'absoluteness' of God as inserted into the world itself (at any rate in the case of Jesus), and recognizes it as that which is most proper to itself, the 'supernatural state of being' bestowed upon it by God's grace.¹³²

This may seem contrary to what has been said above in regard to the immediate vision of God, the immediacy of man's relation with God. How can the relation be immediate if it is mediated through the world? Rahner takes up this question

¹³¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 211.

¹³²Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 13, 20.

when he develops a theology of the symbol. He writes:

The reality of the divine self-communication creates for itself its immediacy by constituting itself present in the symbol, which does not divide as it mediates but unites immediately, because the true symbol is united with the thing symbolized, since the latter constitutes the former as its own self-realization.¹³³

In other words, the symbol does not separate by mediating but because the divine reality itself is present in the symbol (the world, the finite), the symbol mediates an immediacy to God. The true and proper symbol is a mediation to immediacy.¹³⁴

In what way then is the world, the finite, a mediator to the vision of God? Rahner suggests that the beginning of this fulfillment already exists in:

. . . the experience of infinite longing, radical optimism, discontent which cannot find rest, anguish at the insufficiency of material things, protest against death, the experience of being the object of a love whose absoluteness and whose silence our mortality cannot bear, the experience of fundamental guilt with hope nevertheless remaining.¹³⁵

Each of these are experiences of the finite reaching beyond itself. These are the beginnings of the experience of the spiritual in man. They involve an awareness of finiteness in such a way that finiteness itself is open-ended into the infinite. Rahner writes:

¹³³Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 252.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 244.

¹³⁵Rahner, Nature and Grace, p. 37.

For the experience meant here is the experience of eternity; it is the experience that the spirit is more than merely a part of this temporal world; the experience that man's meaning is not exhausted by the meaning and fortune of this world; the experience of the adventure and confidence of taking the plunge, an experience which no longer has any reason which can be demonstrated or which is taken from the success of this world.¹³⁶

This experience seems to be expressing a sense of the futility and ephemeral character of all things as the beginning of an experience of God and grace. This experience is a paradox because the world is experienced as a mediator of the experience of God, yet itself is limited. It is at this point that the dialectic of world and God in its utter nakedness is reached. It is here that Rahner warns that even when one hears the silent, he must not call it God, for that silence itself

. . . is a mute pointer in the direction of God, something which in its namelessness and boundlessness gives us a hint that God is more than just another thing, added to those with which we normally have to deal.¹³⁷

It is in the context of a discussion of asceticism that Rahner points out that the attitude of a Christian toward the world and God is not absolutely clear. He writes:

In a Christian view, there is no absolutely clear, as it were quantitatively measurable relationship between asceticism which flees from the world and ascetic affirmation of the soul. The Christian

¹³⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 88.

¹³⁷Ibid., pp. 26-27.

will always have to exercise both of them in his life, in order to confess in both ways that God is greater than our heart, that an empty heart does not force him to come down and that a heart filled with the splendour of God's creation does not by that alone already possess the true God.¹³⁸

In another place Rahner points out that God is not merely near or distant or to be conceived of as the diametrical antithesis to the world. Rather, and this is the point here, man's basic orientation to God "is more primary, then, and prior to all such dialectical opposites."¹³⁹ God who is near to us has entered our eternal duality but cannot be defined by it. Rahner writes that:

. . . for every genuine theism God is not given in the realm of our everyday experience like other objects of our a posteriori experience. He is not a being within the realm of our experience, but the condition presupposed by the transcendental horizon of our experience.¹⁴⁰

Rahner's understanding of man as a spiritual person is in operation here. From a theological point of view, man is "that being which loses itself in God."¹⁴¹ Man has his center outside of himself in God and is truly at home in himself in this manner.¹⁴² For Rahner man is a strange dualism. He writes:

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 81.

¹³⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 15.

¹⁴⁰Karl Rahner, "Atheism and Implicit Christianity," Theology Digest (February 1968), p. 53.

¹⁴¹Karl Rahner, "Christian Humanism," trans. by Edward H. and Marie E. Schroeder, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, 4, 3 (Summer 1967): 373.

¹⁴²Rahner, "Man (Anthropology)," p. 369.

Man is placed in an ineradicable dualism of two basic lines of self-fulfillment: he is being who is thrust out of himself into the world and the human community, and he is a being who turns back upon himself. This double bent, to take possession of himself and of what is not himself, in knowledge and love, constitutes his essential nature. The going out of himself and entering into himself condition each other. If he did not go out into the world, to the Other as 'thou' and (so far as one can still call this a going out) to God, he would find nothing on entering into himself but the hellish emptiness and empty isolation of the damned. And if he only went out of himself, then he would indeed be alienated from himself, lost, scattered, piecemeal. Gathering and scattering, entry into oneself and going out of oneself, belong to each other essentially. And what constitutes a true human being and Christian is that he entrusts himself freely to both these basic movements, as both under the direction of one same God, and, serene in this creaturely confidence, refrains from making either of them an absolute.¹⁴³

The ultimate Other toward which man as man is thrust can be called God. It is this direct presence to God as both origin and future that Rahner sees as manifestive of man as a spiritual person. He writes:

This direct presence to God belongs to the nature of a spiritual person as the ground which, though not allowing us to grasp it completely in a reflex manner, is nevertheless the permanent basis for all other spiritual activities, and which, on this account, is always more 'there' and less objectively 'there' than anything else.¹⁴⁴

Yet, once all this is said, the fact that the direct ex-

¹⁴³Karl Rahner, Christian in the Market Place, trans. Cecily Hastings (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959), pp. 90-91.

¹⁴⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 209.

perience of God is mediated through the finite must still be developed. Rahner points out that:

. . . love of neighbor is the unique categorical and original act in which man attains his full creaturely reality, and thereby achieves the transcendental and direct experience of God through grace.¹⁴⁵

However, it would be wrong to suggest that one can, in the end, say, when loving the neighbor, that one has possession of God. As Rahner says, "one can only look for it by forgetting self."¹⁴⁶ Love is a detachment from self, a surpassing of oneself which by its very nature is an openness to further possibility and ultimately to God.¹⁴⁷

This leads to a further aspect of a Christian consciousness. Often Christianity is experienced as an ideology. However, the experience of the near God as distant and incomprehensible which is the origin and fulfillment of man's experience of himself prevents man from resting on merely ideological grounds and supposing that there is a basic formula of existence which man can comprehend as man. It is thus that "Christianity constitutes a radical denial of all such idols."¹⁴⁸

This openness to the mystery of the incomprehensible God which does not happen merely in words is what faith is

¹⁴⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 20.

¹⁴⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 89.

¹⁴⁷Rahner, Christian in the Market Place, pp. 138-40.

¹⁴⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 60.

for the Christian. This is summed up by Rahner when he points out that:

The way Christian faith is explained often fails to make it clear that we are dealing ultimately not with concepts and propositions about the mystery of God, but with the living encounter between the inner man and God, when God communicates himself to man and man accepts him by God's grace.¹⁴⁹

In the New Testament this faith is called a conversion. Whatever it is called--faith or conversion--it is an experience of return and of being born again.¹⁵⁰ This faith consciousness is not something final nor is the life that follows upon it merely a uniform activation of this conversion but the faith or conversion itself can also grow and mature.¹⁵¹

It has been pointed out that the center of Christian consciousness is an immediate vision of God. It was also seen that Rahner questions the "standard" neo-scholastic view of the relationship between nature and grace. This view considered grace as beyond consciousness and hence outside the experience of man. Rahner contests this view and attempts to describe the consciousness of grace. He begins by pointing out that the Christian mystics have told us that they have experienced God and hence have also experienced grace.¹⁵² Rahner, further, suggests

¹⁴⁹Rahner, Do You Believe in God, p. 105.

¹⁵⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 5.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 86.

that the experience of grace is a dimension of the ordinary Christian experience.

The fact that there can be a consciousness of grace is implied in the relationship between nature and grace which was developed in the previous chapter. For Rahner, man is never "pure nature" but rather historical man is graced. Thus, he writes:

We experience our nature where we experience grace; grace is only experienced where by nature there is spirit. And vice-versa, in fact, as things are, when spirit is experienced it is a supernaturally elevated spirit.¹⁵³

Grace is an intrinsic element in historical man. It is not merely an accident of his being which is beyond consciousness but rather grace itself makes itself known in man's experience of himself. Thus, Rahner continues:

When once he (man) knows through revelation that this order of grace exists, which is given to him unmerited and does not belong to his nature itself, then he will be more careful; he must take into account that perhaps many things which he concretely experiences in himself and ascribes almost involuntarily to his 'nature' are in fact due to the working in him of what he knows from theology to be unmerited grace.¹⁵⁴

It is this conscious experience of grace that Rahner does not exclude from the ordinary person whom he says:

. . . had already experienced supernatural grace, that he necessarily continues to experience it,

¹⁵³Rahner, Nature and Grace, p. 37.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 35.

and that this mysticism is one of the normal and natural things in Christian experience which no one can avoid, even if he overlooks it or cannot understand it or sets it aside as something he does not want to think about.¹⁵⁵

However, even though Rahner believes that mysticism is central to Christianity, he does recognize that there are steps in the experience of grace. While the mystics have reached the top of these steps, the lowest step is accessible to all.¹⁵⁶ The experience of the spiritual in man which itself is a transcendental experience, an experience of the eternal, is already an experience of grace. It is the experience of the uncanny bottomless depth of our existence which is the experience of the bottomless depth of God communicating himself to man.¹⁵⁷ Rahner writes:

When we have let ourselves go and no longer belong to ourselves, when we have denied ourselves and no longer have the disposing of ourselves, when everything (including ourselves) has moved away from us as if into an infinite distance, then we begin to live in the world of God himself, the world of the God of grace and of eternal life.¹⁵⁸

Rahner continues:

The chalice of the Holy Spirit is identical in this life with the chalice of Christ. This chalice is drunk only by those who have slowly learned in little ways to taste the fullness in

¹⁵⁵Karl Rahner, Faith Today, trans. Ray and Roseleen Ockenden (London: Sheed and Ward, 1965), p. 35.

¹⁵⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 86.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

emptiness, the ascent in the fall, life in death, the finding in renunciation. Anyone who learns this, experiences the spirit - the pure spirit - and in this experience he is also given the experience of the Holy Spirit of grace. For this liberation of the spirit is attained on the whole and in the long run only by the grace of Christ in faith. Where he liberates this spirit, however, he liberates it by supernatural grace which introduces the spirit into the life of God himself.¹⁵⁹

This experience of grace which is an experience of God or a transcendental experience does not "take place" outside of this life nor is it beyond man's historical nature but is itself intrinsic to nature and further it is "the condition of the Possibility for every a posteriori experience, whether it be everyday experience or scientific experience."¹⁶⁰

Conclusions

The Roman Catholic authors who have discussed the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen have attempted to relate Christian mysticism to Zen. The high point of Christian mysticism is seen, though in varying ways, as a vision of God. This Christian experience is characteristically Christocentric. It is described in terms of kenosis, that is, a dying and rising in Christ, and also as a logos theology. The authors see both of these Christocentric characteristics as unique to Christianity, e.g.,

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

¹⁶⁰Rahner, "Atheism and Implicit Christianity," p. 53.

for Johnston, Zen stops at silence while Christianity enters the silence only to arise from it to the Word and for Merton the mediatorship of Christ eliminates the possibility in Christianity of Zen's bare-handed directness. A further question arises when it is recognized that the Christian vision of God can not be complete until after death in the beatific vision. It is also significant that it is not thought, in "traditional" Catholic theology, that anyone could experience the supernatural.

Rahner takes each of these questions a little further. He agrees that the center of Christian consciousness is the vision of God. He also points out, though this is not fully developed in his theology, that there is an experience of God which is not fully realized in this life. However, there are some elements in Rahner's theology which could extend the dialogue with Zen from a Catholic point of view. The experience of God is not thoroughly other-worldly but is itself mediated through the world. This mediation reaches its climax in Christ who, in the context of Rahner's theology of the symbol, mediates immediacy. The center of Christian consciousness is not simply the vision of God, but rather an immediate vision of God. The encounter with Christ which mediates God to man is an encounter with the very term of the mediation and hence also involves an immediacy. Thus, the consciousness of the Christian which is a "having the mind

of Christ" involves an immediacy which may not be as alien to Zen as Merton suggests. The issue is whether both mediacy and immediacy are affirmed in both Zen and Christianity. If it is true, as has been suggested in previous chapters, that both Zen and Christianity affirm both the one and the many, both duality and nonduality, then both traditions would also affirm both the mediacy and immediacy of their central "experience." In the traditional language of Catholic theology, this would mean that the Christian directly experiences the "supernatural" in the encounter with Christ. It would also mean that the "vision of God" of the beatific vision is not simply relegated to after death. Rather the vision of God experienced in the encounter with Christ would also be a direct vision of God in the world. In fact, insofar as Christians believe in the Incarnation, they would affirm the direct vision of God as mediated immediately in the world.

The issue here is central. If it is affirmed that the "vision of God" is possible before death or if it is affirmed that this "vision of God" is possibly only after death--either way the affirmer is expressing a duality, the duality of before and after death. There is a double duality, the duality of mediate and immediate and of before and after death. These dualities are not resolved if only an immediate vision of God before death is affirmed nor are they resolved if only an immediate vision of God after

death is affirmed. The question is whether or not it is possible to articulate the "vision of God" in such a way that it is not represented as a duality nor as a nonduality.

The significant issue of a discussion of Christian and Zen consciousness is whether the central "experience" of Christianity, that is, the vision of God, and the central "experience of Zen, that is, the realization of the Buddha-Nature, are the same or different. The question can be set up in the following manner. Do Christians "experience" God in such a manner that they remain other than God (a duality) or become one with God (a nonduality)? Is the Zen realization such that the Zen-Buddhist is one with the Buddha-Nature (nonduality) or is other than the Buddha-Nature (duality)? Our response is that both Christian and Zen realizations represent a condition of both duality and nonduality, that is, both Zen and Catholicism affirm both oneness and manyness. This, again, means that at bottom there is a similarity between the God of Christianity and the Buddha-Nature of Zen.

However, again, this conclusion is precipitous. It may be true that there is a similarity between Christian experience and Zen experience insofar as both affirm oneness and manyness. However, the roots of this affirmation seem to be quite different as pointed out in previous chapters. If Zen is grounded in the experience of Nothingness

and if Catholicism is grounded in the experience of God as Being, then the experiences of Zen and Catholicism are, at bottom, quite different. Insofar as each of the Catholic authors who have encountered Zen perceive the Zen experience to be an experience of Being, they miss the roots source of Zen as understood by Suzuki and Hisamatsu. In order that the encounter become a meeting, at least, the fundamental reality of Zen as Oriental Nothingness must be faced directly.

CHAPTER VI

ORIGINAL SIN, FAITH, AND SALVATION

This sixth chapter is a continuation of the discussion of Christian consciousness and parallels to it as found in Zen according to the Roman Catholic authors who are engaged in a dialogue with Zen. The themes to be discussed in this present chapter are a further detailing of the nature of Christian consciousness. They are original sin, faith, and salvation. The first part of the chapter is a description of how the Roman Catholics involved in a dialogue with Zen consider these themes and attempt to find correspondences with them in Zen. This is followed by a presentation of the Zen themes as viewed from within Zen according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu, and a presentation of the themes as they are articulated in the theology of Karl Rahner.

Roman Catholics in Dialogue with Zen:

Original Sin

The chief source of man's distress and trouble, according to Dom A. Graham, "occurs whenever we identify what may be called our true self (the 'I') with the assertive, separative ego (the often all-too-demanding

'me;))."¹ This identification involves us in a false self-awareness. It is from this condition that man must continually struggle to free himself (according to the Hindu-Buddhist tradition which lies behind Zen). Graham suggests that "a comparable outlook, though not commonly expounded with a parallel depth of insight, is to be found in the Catholic doctrine of original sin."²

Graham, in his discussion of original sin, suggests that the problem is that man tries to have his own way. The separate ego, though not really separate from the true self, "tends to act as if it were and so take over and dominate the scene."³ The separate conscious ego, when it sees itself as the center, attempts to interpret everything in terms of itself. Hence, it blocks a direct contact with reality and also blocks union with God.⁴

Thomas Merton explains original sin in much the same manner. While speaking of Eckhart and Zen he writes:

The tragedy is that our consciousness is totally alienated from this inmost ground of our identity. And in Christian mystical tradition, this inner split and alienation is the real meaning of original sin.⁵

William Johnston suggests that the teaching that

¹Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 25.

³Ibid., p. 44.

⁴Ibid., p. 47.

⁵Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 12.

"man is born in maya can be paralleled by man born in original sin."⁶ While Johnston does not develop this parallel, other authors do discuss maya though they do not necessarily suggest that it is parallel to the Christian teaching on original sin. Dom A. Graham points out that one of the results of "enlightenment" is being freed from the hazards of maya. Maya, he says, is often understood as "illusion." Maya means that what we see is really there but is seen as if through a veil or as hidden in a mist. The danger is that we may mistake the mist for what it hides, the appearance for the reality.⁷ This is similar to what Graham says about the separative ego and the true self. Just as appearance is mistaken for reality so also separative ego is mistaken for the true self. In both cases they are mistaken for the true self. Maya, however, is not only a veil. It enables us to categorize life as experienced into convenient mentalities."⁸ This can help us to organize the randomness of nature so long as we do not take the categorization for the reality itself.⁹

Peter Kreeft treats of maya when he asks if "the

⁶ Johnston, "The Notion of Man in Zen," p. 98.

⁷ Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 99.

⁸ Ibid., p. 100.

⁹ Ibid.

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"man is born in maya can be paralleled by man born in original sin."⁶ While Johnston does not develop this parallel, other authors do discuss maya though they do not necessarily suggest that it is parallel to the Christian teaching on original sin. Dom A. Graham points out that one of the results of "enlightenment" is being freed from the hazards of maya. Maya, he says, is often understood as "illusion." Maya means that what we see is really there but is seen as if through a veil or as hidden in a mist. The danger is that we may mistake the mist for what it hides, the appearance for the reality.⁷ This is similar to what Graham says about the separative ego and the true self. Just as appearance may be mistaken for reality so also separative ego may be mistaken for the true self. In both cases there is a selfrealization. Maya, however, is not only a veil, but is also a necessity. It enables us to categorize reality, to articulate life as experienced into convenient groupings and instrumentalities."⁸ This can help us to organize the manifoldness of nature so long as we do not take the categorization for the reality itself.⁹

Peter Kreeft treats of maya when he asks if "the

⁶ Johnston, "The Notion of Man in Zen," p. 98.

⁷ Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 99.

⁸ Ibid., p. 100.

⁹ Ibid.

world, matter, time, history, the body and the senses . . . are real and important or illusory and unimportant."¹⁰

While the West seems to take them as real and as perhaps eternal, the East, it seems, insists that they are insubstantial maya. Kreeft suggests that "to call the world maya and to call it real are not opposed,"¹¹ because maya does not mean illusion as much as it means theophany or at least epiphany. The problem is not that the world is an illusion but rather that our ordinary conception of it as selfsubsistent is illusory. The world as theophany is real insofar as real means a participation in or manifestation of the One Only Real.¹²

In regard to maya, Enomiya-Lassalle distinguishes between the world of similarity and the world of differences. The former is the world as revealed in enlightenment. The latter is the world as we experience it through our senses or by means of concepts or differentiating reasoning. This latter world has no reality. It is an illusion. However, absolute reality can become transparent in this world as we know it. The absolute which can, in fact, be realized as absolute emptiness, is visible in a blade of grass.¹³

Closely related to the Christian teaching on

¹⁰Kreeft, p. 536.

¹¹Ibid., p. 537.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen-Meditation für Christianen.

original sin are the questions of the relation between good and evil, between God and evil and man's attitude toward good and evil. After suggesting that some "religious" people tend to apply to God their notions of good and evil so that He conforms to a moral pattern laid down for Him by man, Graham suggests, in accord with the Chinese "doctrine" of Yang-Yin that:

. . . no element in the created world is absolutely positive or absolutely negative . . . The opposites are to be held and to be reconciled in a superior conciliatory principle - the Tao.¹⁴

This approach, Graham suggests, can be reconciled with Christianity. He writes:

God has created a universe in which His positive action (Yang), the generation of things, implies a corresponding negative (Yin), corruption or destruction.¹⁵

It is true that God is good. This is because He lacks nothing of being. He is "whole" which includes goodness and evil, the latter insofar as what God sees as "beneficial to the universe as a whole may involve evil to individuals."¹⁶ This implies that individuals may become identified with God if they learn to look upon evil calmly and dispassionately. Short of this identification with God, the strain between good and evil never completely stops. Hence, the individual feels that he is alien-

¹⁴Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 34.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 36.

ated from people and the world.¹⁷ He does not know his true self. This leads to another point that Graham makes. He suggests that enlightenment is the remedy for ignorance which, for Christianity, is related to sin. In fact, Graham pointedly says that, for Catholicism, sin is basically ignorance, ignorance of the True Self.¹⁸

Peter Kreeft asks if evil is real or illusory. He suggests that, while evil is real for Christianity and an illusion for Zen, "evil is an illusion, though a real illusion (as blindness is a real privation)."¹⁹ He then goes on to distinguish two points of view in respect to evil: the Beatific Vision and Nirvana on the one hand, and the human point of view on the other hand. He says that from the former point of view evil is as necessary as good while from the latter view good is the only necessity for man. The first view (divine) does not preclude the second view (human) but both includes and demands it.²⁰

The movement from the human to the divine point of view takes place by means of a conversion in Christianity and satori in Zen. Kreeft writes:

The psychological structure of the conversion process shows the same hourglass shape for both Zen and Christianity.²¹

¹⁷Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁸Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist, p. 92.

¹⁹Kreeft, p. 535.

²⁰Ibid., p. 535.

²¹Ibid., pp. 519-20.

Kreeft describes the movement as follows:

1. preparation: preambulae fidei;
2. concentration: apparently narrowing, closing;
but really coming to a focus, not a dead end;
3. conversion: satori: the breakthrough;
4. the infinite opening: the new life (mirrors
the old, yet all is new).²²

In the final step the seeker no longer lives out of his ego but the principle of his being is "some sort of all-encompassing, transcendent-yet-immanent absolute."²³

Faith and Salvation

William Johnston, who wonders about the possibility of a Christian satori, sees the greatest possibility for it in descriptions of conversion or metanoia. He does not equate satori and conversion but suggests that "the methodology of Zen, if adopted by a Christian may well culminate in sudden conversion."²⁴

However, Johnston would prefer to relate Zen satori to Christian faith and salvation, rather than to conversion. In an article dealing with the notion of man in Zen he says that Buddhism is less concerned with the question, what is man, than with the question, how can man achieve salvation. This salvation is a liberation, through enlightenment, from the bonds of maya. There is a parallel to

²²Ibid., p. 520 (figure). ²³Ibid., p. 520.

²⁴Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 99.

to this in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans where it is said that man is released from the mire of personal and original sin through faith in Christ which is the Pauline satori.²⁵ "Liberation through enlightenment," Johnston says, "can be paralleled by justification through faith."²⁶ Faith is the breakthrough.²⁷ This faith may be expressed in the words of St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me." There is no activity, no self which I can call my own. All is God who is all in all. Some kind of faith is necessary for this Christian Zen.²⁸ A faith is also found in Japanese Zen which, according to Johnston,

. . . is based on a very great faith--faith in the presence of the Buddha nature in the deepest recesses of the personality; faith that . . . there is a way out of the morass of suffering and that man can be transformed through enlightenment.²⁹

However, the faith is different in each case. To believe in Christ is one thing. To believe in the Buddha nature is another thing. They should not be mixed.³⁰

The content of these comments is elaborated in the light of some comments by Dom A. Graham in a discussion he had with some Zen and Buddhist scholars. He asked:

²⁵ Johnston, "The Notion of Man in Zen," pp. 88-89.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 98.

²⁷ William Johnston, "The Mystical Reading of Scripture: Some Suggestions from Buddhism," Cistercian Studies 6, 1 (1971): 60.

²⁸ Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 18.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 17.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 92.

Do you think there's anything in this: if we were sufficiently enlightened, our response to reality wouldn't require any faith? As I understand it, there's no mystery about Buddhism. Faith comes into Christianity because of unseen elements and mysteries, to some extent. But as I understand it, that doesn't hold true with Buddhism. It is a response to the situation as seen, as experienced and doesn't posit anything.³¹

The Buddhist scholar Sakamoto responded by saying that the Buddhist concept of faith was somewhat different insofar as it is not merely intellectual but moves man to the Bodhisattva way of life. This faith is unconditional and expresses a commitment.³² In the same discussion Abe made a few remarks about faith to which Graham gave his approval. Abe said that the essential difference between Buddhism and religions of faith may be precisely in regard to this issue of faith. In Zen faith in ultimate reality is not as central as the selfrealization of reality. Reality is not an object which stands over against us but we are in reality and are manifestations of it. Thus, in Zen there is no difference between the realizer and what is realized while in Christian faith there is always the object of faith and the subject of faith.³³

Enomiya-Lassalle also finds different ways to salvation in Buddhism and Christianity. He says:

³¹Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist, p. 125.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., p. 127.

In Zen the way of intuition, of enlightenment is the way to salvation. In the Christian sense we think of salvation as the forgiveness of sin and the raising to a supernatural level.³⁴

In Zen the enlightenment salvation is a liberation from suffering and from the cause of suffering. All is directed toward emptiness and this brings salvation.³⁵

Thomas Merton also distinguishes between Christian faith and salvation and Zen intuition. After saying that there is a certainty present in Zen, he points out that it is a certainty that goes with an authentic metaphysical intuition grounded in the existential and empirical rather than religious certainty that comes with the acceptance of the Word of God in faith.³⁶ In another place, Merton does not draw a clear-cut line as he does above. He says that in Zen, the insight or intuition is much more clearly defined than salvation which is vague. The opposite is true, he says, in Christianity where the insight implicit in faith remains obscure and difficult of access. Merton then goes even further when he speaks of enlightenment in the school founded by Dogen as implying the action of a certain kind of religious faith.³⁷ Those who meditate

³⁴Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, p. 8.

³⁵Ibid., p. 150.

³⁶Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 38.

³⁷Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 35.

according to Dogen's way seem to have stumbled upon a hidden and primitive form of theological faith. The faith of which Merton speaks here is:

not merely a psychological assurance that one has gained possession of his object, but, as St. John of the Cross teaches, since "faith is the proximate means of union with God" as He is in Himself, in His invisibility and seeming "emptiness" (as regards our own intellect, to which He is "pure darkness" and "night"), if one's meditation is a resting in faith, then it does in fact attain to the infinite source of all supernatural light.³⁸

Finally, Thomas Hand, a Jesuit missionary in Japan, attempts to present an approach to the investigation of the connection between satori and the Christian search for God by pointing out similarities between faith and satori. First both faith and satori are in the order of intuitive knowledge. Secondly, faith and satori are a seeing of the true self. Thirdly, both of these experiences are existential, that is, both are rooted in and immediately related to concrete reality, openness to which requires total detachment (a fourth similarity). Finally, satori and faith are experiences of something transcendent and holy. The difference between faith and satori is that the former is more personal than the latter.³⁹

What is the main source of man's distress? It is in the light of this question that maya and original sin

³⁸Ibid., p. 37.

³⁹Hand, "The Challenge of Zen," pp. 160-61.

are related by Graham, Johnston, and Merton. Maya involves the identification of the true self and the separative ego (Merton and Graham). The problem is one of self-deception. This is the deeper significance of the Catholic doctrine of original sin. Kreeft suggests that maya is not the problem (maya is more theophany than it is illusion), but rather our conception of the world of selfsubsistence is the problem. Enomiya-Lassalle sees the world of differences as illusory (maya) and the world of similarity as enlightenment. He does, however, suggest that the absolute can become transparent in the world of differences. Closely bound up with the question of original sin is the relation of both God and man to good and evil. Graham tries to reconcile Christianity with the Chinese "doctrine" of Yang-Yin. He then describes sin as ignorance which approach is characteristic of Buddhism and not alien to Catholicism. Kreeft takes the position that evil is a real (Christianity) illusion (Zen). From a divine point of view it is as necessary as the good. The movement from the human to the divine point of view can be called a conversion. Johnston suggests that the best possibility for a Christian satori may be found in metanoia or conversion. The Zen methodology could result in conversion. Johnston, however, would prefer to relate Zen satori with Christian faith and salvation. Graham and Enomiya-Lassalle, however, find the Christian and Zen faith as different. Faith involves some kind of subject-

object relationship. In Zen the selfrealization of reality (the realizer is undifferentiated from what is realized) is central rather than faith in ultimate reality (Graham). While Merton finds the seeds of a theological faith in the Zen of Dogen, he believes Zen places greater emphasis on realization than on faith and salvation. Finally, Thomas Hand describes common characteristics of faith and satori: both are intuitive, a seeing of the true self, existential, experiences of something transcendental. They differ insofar as faith is more personal than satori.

Zen on Original Sin, Faith, and Salvation

The second section of this chapter is an attempt to uncover correspondences in the Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu to the Christian themes of original sin, faith, and salvation. Human life is riddled with many struggles. What is the source of these struggles? The Zen response to this question is the correspondent to original sin in the Christian tradition. The human struggle, according to Suzuki, comes from ignorance.⁴⁰ Suzuki often speaks of Ignorance as the opposite of Enlightenment.⁴¹ There is a problem in speaking this way. Before dealing with this problem the nature of Ignorance is discussed. The very

⁴⁰Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 13.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 128, 138.

difficulty in opposing Ignorance to Enlightenment is intrinsic to the nature of Ignorance itself.

Ignorance does not mean simply "not knowing." It is not merely an intellectual lack of knowledge. Rather Ignorance pertains to our fundamental attitude toward life or experience of life. Suzuki writes:

In Ignorance knowing is separated from acting, and the knower from that which is to be known; in Ignorance the world is asserted as distinct from the self; that is, there are always two elements standing in opposition.⁴²

Thus, Ignorance involves duality. The basic duality is that of the ego and that which the ego conceives of as totally other than itself.⁴³ The ego, however, does not only conceive of itself as separate but also as final, as ultimately responsible for all deeds, thoughts, and speech.⁴⁴ The ego takes itself to be an absolutely independent entity.

This duality is the basis of cognition which means that at the moment this act of cognition takes place, there is Ignorance.⁴⁵ Thus, Suzuki says that "Ignorance is another name for logical dualism."⁴⁶ This is the fundamental problem of human existence: duality. Everything is seen to

⁴²Ibid., p. 128.

⁴³Ibid., p. 139.

⁴⁴Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, p. 283.

⁴⁵Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 128.

⁴⁶Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 52.

be in opposition to something else. This opposition means struggle and pain and suffering.

If Ignorance is opposed to Enlightenment, the duality is still a problem. When Enlightenment is conceived of as the dispelling of Ignorance which is the opposite of Enlightenment, then it is not Enlightenment.

Suzuki writes:

When we think we know something, there is something we do not know. The unknown is always behind the known, and we fail to get at this unknown knower, who is indeed the inevitable and necessary companion to every act of cognition. We want, however, to know this unknown knower, we cannot let this go unknown, ungrasped without actually seeing what it is; that is, Ignorance is to be Enlightened. This involves a great contradiction epistemologically.⁴⁷

Thus, there are two kinds of Ignorance. One is the Ignorance which is utter darkness. The other is the Ignorance which is Enlightenment and has wisdom and trust in it.

This latter Ignorance is the "mystic ignorance" which is the "mystic knowledge."⁴⁸ Suzuki writes:

Ignorance in itself is no evil, nor is it the source of evil, but when we are ignorant of Ignorance, of what it means in our life, then there takes place an unending concatenation of evils.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, pp. 128-29.

⁴⁸Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, pp. 303-04.

⁴⁹Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 129.

As was pointed out in a previous chapter in a discussion of the will in Zen, satori is unattainable by intellectual means. Satori cannot be reasoned to. It is not the conclusion of a logical syllogism. To think that it is, is to remain in duality, to be grasped by Ignorance. Suzuki writes:

Ignorance is brought to subjection only by going beyond the duality of knower and known or any other duality of life including the duality of non-duality and duality. In satori, there is an awakening from the relative field of consciousness because then we still are involved in the duality of relative and absolute. Satori is a 'turning back' or 'turning over' at the basis of consciousness. By this the entirety of one's mental construction goes through a complete change.⁵⁰

Often in the psychology of religion, this change is called conversion. Suzuki has a problem with its application in Zen. He writes:

But as the term is generally used by Christian converts, it cannot be applied in its strict sense to the Buddhist experience, especially to that of the Zen followers; the term has too affective or emotional a shade to take the place of satori, which is above all noetic.⁵¹

If conversion is understood as a turning from one condition to another condition, then we are still involved in a duality. Zen is not a change from one state of being to another. Rather, it is Self-realization, that is, the

⁵⁰ Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, Second Series, p. 24.

⁵¹ Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 85.

coming to be who we already are, that is, the Buddha-Nature. Thus, if conversion is understood as realization or actualization, then it is a closer verbal approximation of Zen satori.

Zen on Faith

In Zen, faith also takes on a unique meaning. Faith is not so much a duality expressed in an I-Thou relationship as it is satori itself. Zen faith is faith in oneself.⁵² This self, again, is not the relative ego but rather the True Self which is the basis of the relative ego. This Self is the limit of rationality where faith is.⁵³ Suzuki writes:

. . . the Zen self is absolute subject or absolute object, and being Absolute is neither subject nor object, neither self or not-self. Zen calls us to find that kind of self and when we find it, it is Faith, and Zen calls that experience satori. Satori and Faith in this sense are identical. . . . Zen Faith is absolute faith which comes out of a something which is neither subject nor object, something that transcends objectivity or subjectivity.⁵⁴

Thus, to say that one has faith in Zen is repetitive. For insofar as Zen is satori which is faith, then Zen itself is Faith. Hisamatsu affirms this when he quotes the third Zen Patriarch: "Faith and Mind are not two/ Not two are Faith and Mind."⁵⁵

⁵²Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 79.

⁵³Ibid., p. 88.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 82.

⁵⁵Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 30.

Zen on Salvation

The ultimate condition within Christianity is called salvation. This term is rarely used by Suzuki. When he does use it, it is used as a synonym for enlightenment. According to Suzuki the noetic dimension of satori sharply distinguishes it from Christian salvation which he perceives as more affective than noetic. Also, Christian salvation is conceived of as other-worldly. In Zen, salvation is to be sought in this world. Thus, Suzuki writes:

Salvation must be sought in the finite itself, there is nothing infinite apart from finite things; if you seek something transcendental, that will cut you off from this world of relativity, which is the same thing as the annihilation of yourself; you do not want salvation at the cost of your own existence. . . . Nirvana is to be sought in the midst of Samsara.⁵⁶

Nirvana is Samsara is a fundamental statement of enlightenment in Mahayana Buddhism. It is also essential in Zen insofar as it points to the one in the many and the many in the one. The realization of Nirvana is Samsara is the actualization of the Buddha-Nature which is Zen satori.

Satori is also described as emancipation.⁵⁷ Suzuki writes: "Zen is discipline in enlightenment. Enlightenment means emancipation. And emancipation is no less than freedom."⁵⁸ In another place Suzuki is more descriptive:

⁵⁶Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 25.

⁵⁷Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, pp. 167, 181.

⁵⁸Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 5.

Satori is emancipation, moral, spiritual, as well as intellectual. When I am in my isness, thoroughly purged of all intellectual sediments, I have my freedom in its primary sense.⁵⁹

This freedom, however, is not simply indulging in whatever the heart desires as an animal or a child, nor is it the rational freedom that adults desire.⁶⁰ Rather, true religious freedom is bound by neither man nor Buddha. Hence, we hear the Zen masters say: "Kill the Buddha." This is the freedom nature of Oriental Nothingness which Hisamatsu calls "subjectively-subjective" freedom, that is, absolutely subjective freedom.⁶¹ Hisamatsu continues:

In Zen, this freedom is attained through seeing into one's True Nature. The very "seeing into one's True Nature" itself is the free subject.⁶²

Thus, to be enlightened in Zen is to be free, absolutely free such that "necessity is freedom and freedom is necessity."⁶³

The fundamental problem of human existence, according to Suzuki, is duality. Satori is not so much the overcoming of duality as it is the realization of the True Self in which the duality of duality and nonduality is transcended. This realization of the True Self in Zen can

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 17.

⁶⁰Hisamatsu, "Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," pp. 91-92.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 93.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 257.

also be described as faith, salvation or freedom.

Karl Rahner on Original Sin, Faith,
and Salvation

The final section of this chapter is a presentation of Rahner's approach to original sin, faith, and salvation. Although Rahner does not often speak explicitly of original sin, its significance is not lost for him. Original sin is that term which expresses the condition in man which is the condition for the possibility of his denying God. In his essence man is neither holy nor unholy. By his free decision man can move in either direction. Thus, there must be in his constitution that which would make either movement possible. It is grace which is the condition for the possibility of a free decision for holiness. It is original sin which is the antecedent condition for the possibility of a free decision for unholiness. Thus, original sin is a condition of historical man which is diametrically opposed to grace. Man is born in this dialectical situation and must choose by a free decision to move in one way or the other. Rahner writes:

Antecedent to the decision, therefore, (whether to faith and love or to personal guilt), man's situation in relation to salvation is dialectically determined: he is in original sin through Adam and redeemed as orientated towards Christ.⁶⁴

⁶⁴Karl Rahner, "Original Sin," *Sacramentum Mundi* 4, ed. Karl Rahner, Cornelius Ernst, and Kevin Smyth (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), p. 333.

Man cannot remain in the dialectical situation as such.

Rahner points out:

In personal free decision the dialectical situation of freedom is annulled in one or other direction. Either a man freely ratifies his state of original sin by personal sin or by faith or love ratifies his condition as redeemed.⁶⁵

In either case, however, the condition of that which is decided against is not merely suppressed, for even when the fundamental option is made, man still remains in the dialectical condition. The effects of death and concupiscence still remain when one has chosen for holiness. The victory of grace is not yet complete in this life.⁶⁶ It is at death that the condition man has chosen for himself is completed and made final.⁶⁷

Rahner on Salvation

One pole of the above dialectic is grace. Rahner relates grace to salvation. Salvation, in a word, is precisely God's absolute selfcommunication.⁶⁸ Thus, salvation is grace itself--uncreated grace or God in his forgiving and divinizing love.⁶⁹ For Rahner, this is also the meaning of freedom. For freedom is not only a presup-

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 333.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 332.

⁶⁷Karl Rahner, "Experiment: Man," Theology Digest (February 1968), p. 61.

⁶⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 174.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 98.

position for salvation,⁷⁰ nor is salvation simply the terminus ad quem of freedom,⁷¹ but "freedom is a theological notion expressing a reality which in the strictest sense of identity is itself the gift of salvation."⁷²

Freedom is not merely

the possibility of always being able to do something else, the possibility of infinite revision, but the capacity to do something uniquely final. . . . Freedom is the capacity for the eternal.⁷³

Freedom does not simply point to a choice, to a doing but it is primarily freedom of being. Rahner writes:

Freedom is then seen to be first and foremost of being. It is not merely an act which is sometimes posited in its exercise, but a transcendental characteristic of the being of man itself. . . . This means that man is that being who is concerned in the depths of his being about this being itself, the being which always has a relationship to itself, which is a subject and never merely a nature, which is always already a person, never simply there but always already personally existent. In this being nothing happens to him which doesn't touch his relationship to himself. His 'I' can never be jumped over, it can never be turned into a mere object, can never be replaced or explained by something else. . . . Freedom of choice is not primarily the ability to choose any object whatsoever or to choose any particular attitude toward this or that: it is the freedom of self-understanding, the possibility of saying yes or no to oneself, the possibility of deciding for or against oneself which is parallel to the knowing self-consciousness and the knowing subjectivity of man. It is always self-realization towards God or a

⁷⁰Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 2, trans. Karl-H. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1963): 98.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 94.

⁷²Ibid., p. 98.

⁷³Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 186.

radical self-refusal with regard to God. . . . Freedom is therefore capacity for wholeness; if it is itself to be able to effect salvation or damnation, that is, the determination of the whole man, then it must of itself bring into play the whole man in his origin and future and this within the interplay of his relationships to himself, the world and God. Freedom is always the self-fulfillment of the objectively choosing man in view of a total achievement, a total disposal of his existence before God.⁷⁴

Thus, for Rahner freedom itself is salvation, or in other words, wholeness and selfrealization, where the realization itself is the very selfcommunication of God. Savior is the title given to a historical person who signifies that this selfcommunication is inaugurated, is happening, and further is something which is happening irrevocably.⁷⁵

The question arises as to whether or not man can be certain about his own salvation. The Council of Trent teaches that there can be no absolute individual certainty about salvation. While Rahner does affirm this teaching of the Council of Trent, he says further that:

It does not say that man must live in a trembling, cowardly fear which mis-trusts God himself. Rather it means that man must look away from himself towards God's unspeakable grace. He should trust that, in the midst of the experience of his inner weakness and poverty, he always is nevertheless in all truth the much loved child of God borne by the grace and mercy of God.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 202-03.

⁷⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 174.

⁷⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 223-24.

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⁷⁰Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations 2, trans. Karl-H. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1963): 98.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 94.

⁷²Ibid., p. 98.

⁷³Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 186.

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⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 202-03.

⁷⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 174.

⁷⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 223-24.

Thus, while man cannot know with absolute certainty about individual salvation, he can trust in the grace of God which itself is God's selfcommunication. Man must work out his salvation in fear and trembling and in firm hope and not with intellectual certainty.⁷⁷

What has just been said in regard to individual salvation can also be substantiated, in Rahner's view, when he points out that salvation is finally what brings man to his perfection and hence "is not yet achieved and at best must yet become."⁷⁸ In this sense, salvation is not a moment in history but rather the culminating end of history. Hence, salvation is an object of faith, hope, and prayer rather than of possession.⁷⁹ This belief, however, does not rule out a present experience of salvation. For while salvation is the culminating point of history it also takes place within history. Salvation takes place now. Grace is already given to man now.⁸⁰ Rahner writes: "It is from the present experience of salvation that the genuine future yet to come is known."⁸¹ The ground of the present experience of salvation is

⁷⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 210.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 97.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 98.

⁸¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 342.

faith in the incarnation of the Logos, in the death and resurrection of Christ, as the historical events which are permanent, definitive and unsurpassable because God has communicated himself to the world in them wholly and therefore unsurpassably.⁸²

And further, a belief in the Incarnation means that "man can realize his attainment of God in himself, only by means of the material of this world and its history."⁸³ In the end, however, as pointed out above, salvation is ultimately granted by God insofar as it is precisely God's selfcommunication which is salvation. Thus, for Rahner, salvation is already present, but not yet fulfilled. It is in this way that Rahner can say that man is just and sinner at the same time but he is also quick to add that his formula does not hold if it is understood to define man in a suspended dialectic between sinfulness and holiness. For, ultimately, man is no longer sinful and justified at the same time but justified.⁸⁴

Rahner on Faith

As mentioned above, the present experience of salvation is called faith. Faith is not merely a belief in the possibility of salvation but, "it is in fact the real intensive fullness of what is meant in each individual object of faith . . . which is none other than the triune God

⁸²Ibid., p. 343.

⁸³Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 191.

⁸⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 223.

in his real self-communication."⁸⁵ But also from the point of view of salvation as freedom, the very venture of freedom is a trusting venture and hence an act of faith.⁸⁶ Faith is both a saving power, the fundamental saving power in the whole of Christian life,⁸⁷ and the openness of the believer to the mystery of God.⁸⁸ This faith is not merely a set of formulations (though this is not excluded) but also means an existential following of Christ⁸⁹ which involves a poverty of spirit. Faith as openness to the mystery of God means that there is a realization of the futility of all earthly measures and values (hence faith cannot result in an ideology)⁹⁰ and an openness to the grace of God which openness is the ground of poverty of spirit.⁹¹ Lived faith is the following of Christ in the spirit of poverty. This leads into the question posed in the next chapter on ethics or morality.

⁸⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 25-26.

⁸⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 195.

⁸⁷Rahner, Do You Believe in God, p. 94.

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 83, 85, 103-04.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 103-04. ⁹⁰Ibid., p. 83.

⁹¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 187-88.

Conclusion

Much of what has already been discussed in previous chapters is dealt with in this chapter from another point of view. The issue of this chapter is: What is the root problem of the human and how is the problem resolved? In Christianity the problem is discussed in terms of original sin and the "resolution" of the problem in terms of faith, salvation, and freedom. In Zen the root problem is duality. Suzuki expresses this problem in terms of ignorance which is a separation of knowing and acting, knower and known, self and the world. The fundamental problem is not that life is dual but rather that the human person is ignorant in regard to this duality, which ignorance itself is a duality. The resolution of the problem is discussed in terms of the realization of the Buddha-Nature or satori.

Graham comes closest to Zen's understanding of the root problem. He describes original sin as a false self-consciousness, that is, an identification of the true self with the separative ego. At first glance, this may not seem to be a duality. However, the problem is that the human person, in original sin, perceives the separative ego to be the true self. The whole of reality is seen to be dual. Thus, the human person is not only caught in a duality but is ignorant of the condition of duality.

Rahner points out that original sin is an essen-

tial unholiness. The human condition, he points out, is having the possibility of a choice between salvation and damnation. Original sin is that structure which is the condition for the possibility for choosing damnation. In this approach of Rahner there is a recognition of a fundamental duality in the human, the duality of salvation and damnation. Original sin refers to one of the poles of the dialectical human condition. Even though a human chooses holiness and thus ratifies the condition of salvation, this choice is not totally effective until death. Thus, for Rahner, the condition of duality remains until death. It is at this point, as was suggested in the previous chapter, that another duality exists, the duality of before and after death. However, this duality is not as clear cut as it would seem. The issue could be stated in the following manner. The duality of salvation and damnation is also, in philosophical terms, the duality of being and nonbeing. Is it possible that Christian salvation is such that both being and nonbeing are affirmed or, in other words, that salvation itself is the condition for the possibility of both salvation and damnation? This question is related to the questions of the previous chapters in regard to grace and the fundamental "experiences" of Christianity and Zen. It is fundamental in the meeting between Zen and Christianity. The beginning of a response to it can be seen in a discussion of salvation and enlightenment in terms of freedom.

According to Suzuki, Zen enlightenment is liberating and according to Rahner salvation is equated with freedom. The question is whether or not the liberation of Zen corresponds to Christian freedom. If there is such a correspondence, then there is also a correspondence between satori and salvation. The following is an attempt to present the beginnings of a discussion of this question.

In Zen, freedom is authentic Selfhood. Hisamatsu points this out when he writes:

In Buddhism, however, the ultimate is for us to awaken to the Self, which, not being bound by anything--not even by its "not being bound"--works freely. Indeed, it will be even more correct to say that just because it is not bound by--or to--anything it can work freely.⁹²

In Zen this freedom is called enlightenment. Suzuki points out that enlightenment is not less than freedom. To be free is to be bound by no form. It is to be the True Self which Self is not rigid but rather fluid. The nonrigidity and fluidity are not such that the Self is wishy-washy. For to be such would also be to be bound by form, the form of no-form or the form of fluidity and nonrigidity. This freedom is also called emptiness. In Zen, according to Hisamatsu, the enlightened person is "completely unconditioned and non-dependent." This person is a truly free subject, that is, the True Nature is actualized.

⁹²Hisamatsu, "The Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," pp. 93, 94.

Rahner speaks of Christian freedom in terms of self-realization. The ground of freedom, according to Rahner, is mystery. This mystery is such that the human is not defined by any category, comprehended by any idea or pigeonholed in any system. Nor is the human necessarily determined to affirm self as this mystery. The human can accept or reject the very ground in which the "Self" is realized. Thus, the freedom of the Christian is a freedom in which the Christian is open to all possible definitions of the "I" and constrained by none.

Other questions that are connected to the question of salvation and freedom that could fruitfully be investigated in an ongoing Roman Catholic-Zen dialogue are: What is the role of Christ in salvation? Is there any person in Zen who "plays" a similar role? Can Christian salvation be truly free if it is bound to a form of "after-death"? These questions have already been framed in one form or another in previous chapters. Like the other basic issues in this dialogue, they are grounded in the question of duality and nonduality, one and many.

However, without waiting for the dialogue to take up these issues in further detail, on the basis of our analysis in this conclusion, it can be said that there is a correspondence between freedom in Zen which is the not-being-bound-by-form, not even the form of no-form, and Christian freedom in which the Christian is not bound by any form and

hence is able to be any form. This correspondence points to a correspondence between Christian salvation and Zen enlightenment.

This conclusion, however, would again be presumptuous, if one does not take into consideration the fundamental Zen experience of enlightenment or liberation as an experience which is the realization of "Oriental Nothingness" or the Nonbeing which is beyond being and nonbeing. On the Catholic side, the fundamental experience of salvation or freedom is usually understood as oneness with the God who is ultimate Being. Unless this fundamental difference is faced and overcome, one may not find any correspondence between freedom and salvation on the one hand and enlightenment and liberation, on the other hand.

CHAPTER VII

ETHICS

Zen has often been accused of being antinomian while Roman Catholicism is perceived by many to be primarily an ethical religion. This chapter will discuss the views of the Roman Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen in regard to ethics and the following sections of the chapter will describe the approaches of Suzuki, Hisamatsu, and Rahner to the theme of ethics.

Ethics in the Writings of Roman Catholics in Dialogue with Zen

Dom A. Graham, while discussing the classic distinction between "thought" and "ought" points out that the Catholic tradition "stresses the importance of 'ought' as well as 'thought.'"¹ He then says that the "ought" is derived from "thought":

The Church's ethic is the counterpart of the Church's metaphysic: the will is not forced into action by something alien to itself, it responds naturally to the light of the intellect. Understanding generates compassion.²

¹Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 92.

²Ibid.

Graham, however, does not find the same to be explicitly true of Zen.³

William Johnston approaches the question of an ethic in Zen and Christianity from a different angle. After suggesting that Zen refuses to create a scientific ethical system, he points out that, according to Nishida, the high point of morality is not

in thinking and reasoning and fidelity to law, but in the spontaneous doing of good - which, however, is only possible when one has reached the Zen situation beyond subject and object.⁴

Johnston then describes an approach to ethics in Christianity in Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas which is analogous to, though not the same as, the Zen approach. Quoting Augustine's famous saying: "Love and do what you will," he suggests that love can lead one to do what is right, even without rules and regulations. He also points out that Aquinas speaks of a knowledge of con-naturality, that is, "love gives a kind of knowledge that is above all reason, a spontaneous intuition of what is right."⁵

Johnston does not stop here, but raises a further question which arises from his relationship with the Zen way as exemplified by the Zen monk. After describing that

³Ibid., pp. 91, 93.

⁴Jihnston, The Stillpoint, p. 94.

⁵Ibid.

the masters turned out good and virtuous men through the practice of silent Zen, he wonders "how this mystical silence is connected with the acquisition of virtue."⁶ One of the most characteristic qualities of the mystic is detachment. In Zen this involves a silent supra-conceptual concentration and in Christianity it is sometimes called "the living flame of love." The question at issue is this: "Is this mystical detachment something so radical that it can produce all other virtues?"⁷

After a lengthy discussion of a psychological approach to detachment which is directly related to growth, Johnston concludes:

The silence of mysticism implants virtue in the soul precisely because it effects a certain deep detachment which, in turn, leads to love. And that one who loves has all the virtues is stated again and again in the scriptures: in the last analysis there is not a multiplicity of virtues but only one virtue.⁸

That detachment is at the center of both Zen and Roman Catholicism, though in different ways, comes through time and again in the writing of Johnston. Detachment from all things is demanded in the striving for enlightenment.⁹ A chief point in the dialogue between Zen and Christianity is the whole doctrine of detachment.¹⁰ The key thing in

⁶Ibid., p. 97.

⁷Ibid., p. 99.

⁸Ibid., p. 105.

⁹Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁰Johnston, "Dialogue with Buddhism," p. 3.

Zen is detachment.¹¹ This detachment is not simply a cutting-off of self from all things.¹² Rather "one becomes detached in order that something else may shine forth. In the Buddhist this is his Buddha Nature."¹³

Graham prefers to speak of "non-attachment" than of "detachment." He writes:

To be detached suggests having broken free perhaps violently, from something to which one is now opposed, with the possibility of a corresponding increase of ego-consciousness expressed in aversion. . . . Non-attachment conveys the subtler notion, and one more rarely realized, of both enjoying an experience and not being involved in it.¹⁴

This nonattachment is, for Graham, the direct contact with reality of Zen.¹⁵ This is the "key to liberation, the truth that makes us free": a "non-attachment to whatever enhances our separative self."¹⁶

Enomiya-Lassalle also sees detachment as a necessary condition for the central Christian experience (coming nearer to God) as well as the core of Zen, that is, enlightenment. Zen detachment is both the expression of and means to enlightenment. It means to "give up

¹¹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 16.

¹²Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 104.

¹³Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 17.

¹⁴Graham, Zen Catholicism, pp. 43-44.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 73.

everything so thoroughly that only mere existence remains."¹⁷ This is the same detachment necessary for "coming nearer to God."

Thomas Merton sees nonattachment in terms of transcending learning (conceptual knowledge as an end in itself). Zen nonattachment can be summed up in the term "no-mind" which must be so radical that there is not even an attachment to emptiness itself.¹⁸

From the Christian point of view, this nonattachment is often spoken of in terms of love. Johnston points out that detachment in Zen resembles the Christian contemplative path of John of the Cross.¹⁹ The two paths are, however, different. The unifying principle in Christian mysticism is love which must be present before one abandons the reasoning and thinking of discursive prayer. In Zen, according to Johnston, there is no mention of love.²⁰ Johnston, however, is not entirely consistent in regard to the place of love in Zen. He points out that there is a parallel between Christian charity and Buddhist compassion.²¹ In The Stillpoint he recognizes that "the element

¹⁷Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 74.

¹⁸Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 221.

¹⁹Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 17.

²⁰Johnston, "Zen and Christian Contemplation," p. 707; The Stillpoint, p. 77.

²¹Johnston, "The Notion of Man in Zen," p. 98.

of positive love is less conspicuous; but that it is not completely absent is clear from the gratitude and kindness of those who have persevered to the peak point of satori."²² It would seem that Johnston finds love expressed in Zen, yet this love is not as central to Zen as it is to Christianity or to the Christian mystical experience.

Graham finds a distinct parallel between Christian agape and Buddhist karuna. In Christianity the "enlightened" person is so aware of God in a nonpossessive manner that he is more and more receptive to the Divine love (agape). Graham then writes: "The parallel to this, in the tradition behind Zen Buddhism, is karuna, compassion."²³ A few years later, in a conversation with Yamada Roshi, a Zen master of the Rinzai school, this presence of compassion in Zen was affirmed by the Roshi who, while acknowledging that Suzuki's complaint that Japanese Zen in its present form was lacking in karuna, said:

However, I believe that it is not true Zen if it is lacking karuna, because the Zen experience is nothing but to become one with things or other people. So things or other persons are not things or other people, but one's own self. Compassion, therefore, is the essential matter for Zen.²⁴

Graham accepted this and suggested that its opposite would

²² Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 104.

²³ Ibid., p. 148.

²⁴ Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist, p. 160.

be a misrepresentation of Zen. Thus, for Graham karuna is an essential element of Zen enlightenment.

Thomas Merton also holds this view. In a meeting he had with Suzuki, Merton recalls the last words of Suzuki before they parted: "The most important thing is love!" Merton commented on this by saying: "Truly Prajna and Karuna are one (as the Buddhist says), or Caritas (love) is indeed the highest knowledge."²⁵

Peter Kreeft asks: "Is an ethic, especially the love-ethic, a help or a hindrance, a value or a disvalue?"²⁶ In an attempt to respond to this question, Kreeft describes two different approaches to ethics: Christian and Zen. The former, he suggests, is not only useful but goes right to God. God is love. Love, for the Christian, is an ultimate value insofar as it partakes directly in the nature of God. Zen, however, goes beyond ethics. Zen does not tell us to love our neighbor but to be our neighbor. Zen is "detached," nonpersonal. Kreeft attempts to resolve this seeming contradiction. He finds in Zen a love of neighbor as well as the being one's neighbor. In Christianity he finds a being one's neighbor as well as the love of one's neighbor. He calls this love a para-love, which the Christian attains "via the 'affirmation of images' of love

²⁵Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 62.

²⁶Kreeft, p. 534.

(ethics)" and the Zen monk realizes "via the 'negation of images' of love."²⁷ This is possible because it is not the ego which makes true love, but rather true love itself makes the ego. Lost is not "in me" but I am "in love."

Dom A. Graham introduces the ethical question in terms of the categories "ought" and "thought." Roman Catholicism, he says, derives its "ought" from its "thought" or its ethics from its metaphysics. W. Johnston wonders what the source of morality is. In regard to Zen, he follows Nishida by saying that satori makes possible the spontaneous doing of good which is morality. Essential to this is his line of reasoning: the silence of mysticism leads to and is expressive of a radical detachment which is love which is the source of virtue. This is true for Zen and for Catholicism, e.g., the "love and do what you will" of Augustine and the knowledge of con-naturality of Thomas Aquinas. All the authors considered see both detachment and love as essential to Zen and Catholicism. Christian agape or charity is related to Buddhist compassion or karuna. Kreeft distinguishes between love of neighbor (Christian) and being one's neighbor (Zen). He finds both in Christianity and in Zen.

Zen on Ethics

D. T. Suzuki does not write explicitly on a Zen ethics. However, he does touch on it enough to give the

²⁷Ibid.

broad lines of Zen's approach to morality. Ultimately Zen is neither asceticism nor is it an ethical system.²⁸ Suzuki describes ethics as "the applicatuon of logic to the facts of life."²⁹ As such, then, ethics is a self-conscious relationship to life. The Zen critique of logic can also be applied to ethics. Because of this, no matter how praiseworthy are the deeds of service, they remain impure.³⁰ For insofar as ethics is an aspect of logic, it remains in the sphere of duality. Good and evil are intellectual distinctions. Satori is beyond good and evil.³¹ It is because of this that Zen is often accused of encouraging an antinomian spirit. Suzuki recognizes this when he writes: "Antinomianism is also a pitfall for the followers of Zen against which constant vigil is needed."³² This vigil is aided by the ascetical preparation for Zen. Suzuki writes: Humility, poverty, and inner sanctification - these ideals of Zen are what saves Zen from sinking into the level of the medieval antinomians.³³ Other virtues practiced in Zen include industry, service to others,

²⁸Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 121.

²⁹Ibid., p. 64. ³⁰Ibid.

³¹D. T. Suzuki, The Zen Doctrine of No-Mind (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1949), pp. 116-17.

³²Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 130.

³³Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 330.

and obedience. The Zen monk is committed to the Buddhist moral precepts. These virtues and precepts are not unrelated to the fundamental Zen experience. They are basic expressions of love (karuna) and nonattachment.

Satori, insofar as it is a foothold which is really no foothold and grasps life directly with bare hands, is the basis for nonattachment. Suzuki writes:

In fact, the theory of Sunyata as expounded in all the Prajna sutras is no more than philosophizing on the doctrine of non-attachment.³⁴

Thus, the simplicity and humility which is expressive of the life of a Zen monk, insofar as they express the spirit of nonattachment, arise from the very foundation of Zen, the Buddha-Nature. This spirit is expressed in a poem quoted by Hisamatsu:

Spring has hundreds of flowers, autumn the moon;
Summer has cool winds, winter the snow.
When nothing idle weighs heavy on the mind,
This then is man's favorite season.³⁵

The man who lives out of this source is described by Suzuki as an artist of life. All that goes to make up this man--his body and his personality--"is both the material on which and the instruments with which the person molds his creative genius into conduct, into behavior, into all forms of action, indeed into life itself."³⁶ This man is not bound by convention, conformity, or his own ego. He

³⁴Ibid., p. 149.

³⁵Hisamatsu, Zen and the Fine Arts, p. 17.

³⁶Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 16.

is free and master of himself for his "Self has touched the unconscious, the source of infinite possibilities. He is 'no-mind.'"³⁷ It is in this man, the artist of life, that the Buddha-Nature is realized. This life is one of love and compassion which are of the essence of Buddhahood.³⁸ It is a love which has no object and thus is "extended" toward every object.³⁹ "The Buddhist training consists in transforming tanha into karuna, ego-centered love into something universal, eros into agape."⁴⁰ The Zen "ethic" is not simply asceticism, but the very maturing of one's moral character, which itself is the realization of the Buddha-Nature.

It might seem that Zen enlightenment pertains primarily to knowledge. Suzuki writes:

Zen is liable to emphasize Prajna and the Karuna side is apt to be neglected. But in fact Karuna and Prajna are two aspects of Reality and the one complements the others.⁴¹

As was pointed out in Chapter II, prajna is the oneness of things and karuna is the manyness of things. Prajna points to being while karuna points to becoming. Karuna is the active aspect of enlightenment. "Karuna is the

³⁷Ibid., p. 16.

³⁸Ibid., p. 70.

³⁹Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 43.

⁴⁰Suzuki, Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist, p. 59.

⁴¹Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 38.

way we live the life of activity."⁴² There is no specific object for karuna. By not limiting itself to any specific object, karuna touches upon every object.⁴³

The importance of the will in Zen, according to Suzuki, has already been pointed out. The will is even more basic than the intellect. Suzuki writes: "The will is the man."⁴⁴ This will is active for the sake of love for all beings. Love and compassion are of the essence of enlightenment and hence of Buddhahood.⁴⁵ Buddhist love is an ungrudging service of others,⁴⁶ done secretly.⁴⁷

Suzuki also comments on the affirmation of Augustine, "Love God and do what you will." He suggests that there is a correspondence between Augustine's saying and a poem by Bunun:

While alive
Be a dead man,
Thoroughly dead;
And act as you will,
And all is good.

Suzuki points out that to love God is "to be of no-mind, to

⁴²Ibid., p. 41.

⁴³Ibid., p. 43.

⁴⁴Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 123.

⁴⁵Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 70.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 75.

⁴⁷Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 318.

become a dead man."⁴⁸ Thus, love of God is closely related to the realization of the Buddha-Nature in Zen. This kind of love is essential in Zen. Enlightenment is not devoid of great compassion. In the end prajna is karuna.

However, Suzuki also points out that:

. . . so far, historical circumstances have prevented its asserting itself in this direction. Zen is socially-minded as any other religion, but this has been manifested or demonstrated more individualistically, owing to its emphasis upon individual experience.⁴⁹

Thus, while karuna is essential to Zen enlightenment, it has not been as fully developed as it could be.

Rahner on Ethics

The third section of this chapter is a presentation of Karl Rahner's approach to morality. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Christian faith, for Rahner, involves an opening of oneself to God not merely in words but in an existential following of Christ.⁵⁰ From this it can be implied that ethics is derived, for Rahner, from the Christian faith consciousness which is salvation, grace or the self-communication of God. Rahner suggests this is another way when he states that in a certain sense the goal of Christian moral maturity is integrity or the total and final

⁴⁸Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 16.

⁴⁹Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 273.

⁵⁰Rahner, Do You Believe in God, pp. 104-05.

integration of one's whole life.⁵¹ This integrity is not merely a goal. It is also present insofar as salvation is present. The way to this integrity involves dedication which is "the earnest attempt to reach the moment of eternity in time through an act of love."⁵²

The development of the Christian life (which is the life of God) is often spoken of in terms of asceticism. Rahner speaks of asceticism as the "liberation of the divine in man,"⁵³ and also as a looking at his own death situation "straight in the eye" which is to say "yes" to it.⁵⁴ Thus, there are two elements in asceticism: the liberation and the confrontation or meeting of death.

For Rahner, an important dimension of opening oneself to the mystery of God is that our love for God will "succeed only if we lose the very thought of what we are doing, in the thought of Him for Whom we are doing it."⁵⁵ He also points out that one can seek the experience of grace (God) by forgetfulness of self.⁵⁶ This is very important for Rahner especially insofar as he sees our

⁵¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 374.

⁵²Karl Rahner, On Prayer (New York: Paulist, 1958), p. 79.

⁵³Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 67.

⁵⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 73.

⁵⁵Rahner, On Prayer, pp. 31-32.

⁵⁶Rahner, Do You Believe in God, p. 114.

age as particularly given to much introspection and self analysis which results in a preoccupation with the how of opening oneself to God. While speaking of the meaning of Christmas he writes:

Christmas tells you in the experience of solitude to: trust the nearness, it is not emptiness: let go and then you will find; give up and then you will be rich.⁵⁷

This letting go or giving up arises out of a specific kind of indifference. For Rahner indifference does not mean apathy or blindness.⁵⁸ He says that:

By indifference is here meant an extremely alert, almost over-acute sense of the relativity of all that is not God himself; of all things distinct from God as preliminary, needing to be passed through, expendable, ambiguous. Religious things included, for they too are not God.⁵⁹

This indifference, it must be especially pointed out, also includes an indifference toward separate individuals as such. Here too, as above, we are in the world of relativity.⁶⁰ But this indifference is not such that it kills the heart. "It must only be the death of that secret self-seeking which cramps us and rejects the infinite freedom of God."⁶¹ To be true, indifference must be love which involves a going out of oneself, a surpassing of

⁵⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 28.

⁵⁸Rahner, Christian in the Market Place, p. 131.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 123.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 140.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 131.

oneself, a detachment from oneself, a letting go of oneself, "an act of denial towards the anxious assertion of its own existence by the finite being, which always thinks it has got to watch out for itself."⁶² This "indifference is simply the openness of love . . . to 'all' which is God, which it must preserve if it is truly to love the individual."⁶³

Rahner approaches this issue of indifference more fully in another context, that is, that of a theology of renunciation. The root of renunciation and that from which it derives its ultimate characterization is love.⁶⁴ How this is so must be shown. First of all, Christian perfection (or the fundamental goal of morality), for Rahner, "consists simply and solely in the perfection of the love which is given in Christ by the spirit of God who is communicated to us in justification and sanctification."⁶⁵ Renunciation, within this graced condition, thus, cannot be understood merely in terms of a purely natural ethics.⁶⁶ It is not a mere training in selfcontrol over one's personal impulses, or even merely a training for mystical experience.⁶⁷ Rather Christian renunciation is directly

⁶²Ibid., p. 139.

⁶³Ibid., p. 140.

⁶⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 50.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 47.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 49.

⁶⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 155, note

derived from Christ and manifests an imitation of Christ.⁶⁸ Since imitation of Christ or Christian perfection also must be practiced in the context of love, renunciation also must be practiced in the context of love. Further, since renunciation involves a sacrifice of truly valued positive mundane values,⁶⁹ the only possible reason for it can be the choice of a particular expression of love.⁷⁰ Why is this so? Rahner suggests that renunciation is an expression of love insofar as it, precisely as a sacrifice or denial,

is a profession of man's shifting the center of his existence out of the world, since the renunciation of the highest positive values of this world is either meaningless and perverse within this world or must be regarded as the believing gesture of that love which reaches out beyond the world and its goods (even those of a personal nature).⁷¹

The culmination of such renunciation is death itself wherein man is asked to renounce himself fundamentally and allow himself to be disposed of beyond himself into what is incalculable.⁷² But it also must be recognized that renunciation itself is not necessarily the last word in respect to Christian perfection. This is so insofar as renunciation

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 50.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 151.

⁷⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 3, 51.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 54.

⁷²Ibid.

is truly Christian only if it does not make out that it can by its own power conquer God in himself, and only if it shows itself as an of itself merely empty . . . gesture of the depleted heart which - in spite of all emptiness - is filled by God, out of pure grace, with God and his love, and indeed is truly emptied out only in this deed of God, so that the gesture of receptivity is already the effect of having received.⁷³

Renunciation can be such only if it is not the exclusive way to Christian perfection.⁷⁴

This limitation is discussed more fully by Rahner in a discussion of renunciation and faith. Renunciation is possible only for the sake of a higher good (it is not the only way of attaining this higher good, but it is sufficient that it be a possible and reasonable means).⁷⁵ This highest good is such that it is an act of grace; it contradicts the sinful corruption of the world which it transcends and finally is bestowed upon us as a future good and hence is an object of faith and hope.⁷⁶ Faith here is not a proposition to be acknowledged, but is a reaching out for God which is fulfilled in love. This faith which reaches its fullness in love can be exercised as both flight from and assent to the world which dialectical opposition must be present in every Christian life though in different degrees

⁷³Ibid., pp. 55-56.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 56.

⁷⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 152.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 153.

according to the particular vocation of the individual.⁷⁷
 When all this has been said, it must be recalled that the reality (res) of Christian perfection is ultimately love of God and love of neighbor and renunciation is one sign of this love with the other sign being the love-informed "worldly" life of Christians.⁷⁸

This discussion of indifference, detachment, and renunciation has led to the center of Christian morality or perfection which is founded upon a love of God and of neighbor which is possible insofar as for the Christian God's selfcommunication itself is a pouring forth of love. How is this so?

It has been pointed out in a previous chapter that salvation is the selfcommunication of God which salvation is the epitomy of human realization. This love of God for man is manifest in man's love of God. Rahner writes:

The love of God, and this love alone, is capable of embracing everything. It alone places man completely before the one without whom man would be merely conscious of radical emptiness and nothingness: it alone is able to unite all man's many-sided and mutually contradictory capabilities because they are all orientated towards that God whose unity and infinity can create the unity in man which, without destroying it, unites the diversity of the finite. . . . Love of God is the only total integration of human existence, and we have only grasped it in its dignity and all-embracing greatness if we have understood it to be this and once we suspect that it must be the content of the moment of eternity in time

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 56.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 156.

and hence the content of eternity with God himself which is born out of it.⁷⁹

But this love of God, this direct relationship to God is necessarily mediated through the finite--through love of neighbor. For Rahner, there is an intrinsic relationship between love of God and love of neighbor. We are loved by God so that we may love one another (John 13: 34).⁸⁰ In order to show more clearly that there is a unity of love of God and love of neighbor, Rahner distinguishes two aspects of a human spiritual act: the explicit object and category and the formal object of the act or the transcendental horizon or "space" within which the explicit object is encountered. These two aspects are mutually interdependent. The transcendental horizon is the condition for the possibility of the explicit object itself and the transcendental horizon is itself given in the encounter with a concrete object which latter does not necessarily have to be systematically named. It is within this context that Rahner says that:

The original relationship to God is . . . love of neighbor. If man becomes himself only by the exercise of love towards God and must achieve this self-mastery by a categorical action, then it holds good perfectly in the order of grace - that the act of love of neighbor is the only

⁷⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 187.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 235.

categorical and original act in which man attains the whole of the concretely given reality and finds the transcendental and supernatural, directly experienced experience of God.⁸¹

This love of neighbor is not such that it is a motive to love God nor such that God is loved through the neighbor but rather the neighbor is really loved himself. "The categorized love of neighbor is the primary act of the love of God."⁸² Therefore, the fundamental thrust of Christian morality is love of neighbor which is itself love of God. Thus, it can be said that the I-Thou relationship of love is the true and all-embracing act which is fundamental to human living.⁸³ It itself is embraced in the mystery we call God and hence is never simply present but always on the way to itself.⁸⁴ This is of the essence of Christian morality. Rahner writes:

Morality is the free personal acceptance of one's own pre-established nature, confidently coming to grips with one's own dynamic reality in all its united though multiple dimensions and precisely coming to grips also with that nature which realizes itself only when it turns lovingly to another person and when it accepts its own nature as the nature of the mystery of love.⁸⁵

Love is the very source of unity, but while a unifying factor, it does not destroy the multiplicity. For example,

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 189-90.

⁸²Ibid., p. 247.

⁸³Rahner, Theological Investigations 8, 17.

⁸⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 451.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 441.

in the Church it is the spirit of love which binds the many diverse gifts into a unity which retains the diversity.⁸⁶ This function of love is presented by Rahner when he speaks of the unity of the Church:

Ultimately only one thing can give unity in the Church on the human level: the love which allows another to be different even when it does not understand him.⁸⁷

Another aspect of love which has been alluded up to to this point and which is now treated explicitly is the relationship between love and knowledge. For Rahner, love is the fulfillment of knowledge. He writes:

How can we approach the heart of all things, the true heart of reality? Not by knowledge alone, but by the full flower of knowledge, love. Only the experience of knowledge's blooming into love has any power to work a transformation in me, in my very self. For it is only when I am fully present to an object that I am changed by meeting it. And it is only in love that I am fully present - not by bare knowing, but in the affection engendered by knowing. Only then is my knowledge anything more than a fleeting shadow, passing across the stage of consciousness. Then I have knowledge which is really myself, which abides as I myself abide.⁸⁸

The last word here is not with knowledge, but with love. The intellect in striving to know is confronted by mystery. In this confrontation the intellect can "consume itself in

⁸⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 83.

⁸⁷Karl Rahner, The Dynamic Element in the Church (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964), p. 74.

⁸⁸Karl Rahner, Encounters with Silence, trans. James M. Denske (Westminster: Newman, 1960), pp. 29-30.

protest or, transform itself in the self-surrender by which it accepts the mystery as such, that is, in love, and so to attain its proper perfection."⁸⁹

It might seem from what has been said that all human existence and morality can be reduced to love.

Rahner, however, poses another dilemma. He writes:

Love is everything and yet not everything; where there is love, there is everything, and yet there are other values besides love which must not be excluded from the realm of what is moral.⁹⁰

The question at issue here is the question of the plurality and unity of the virtues. Can all be reduced to love or can love include all? Rahner argues that there is a plurality of virtues as well as an ultimacy to love. Just as love is the fulfillment of knowledge, so also love is the fulfillment of all the virtues. Love is the self-realization of man and not merely the integration of partial moments of self-realization.⁹¹ Rahner, then, points out that love is not simply present but always moving on the way to itself.⁹² Love is dynamic and always moving into itself. The other virtues transcend themselves and attain their fullness in love. But love cannot be reduced to, e.g., the fulfillment of the other commandments. Love is without measure. It cannot be full while man is still a

⁸⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 44.

⁹⁰Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 437.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 443.

⁹²Ibid., p. 451.

pilgrim.⁹³ Individual virtues can exist in this pilgrim condition because man can realize and accept moral values in temporal succession without having completely realized himself in love.⁹⁴ The realization of love is impossible because of the very nature of love which is true love "only to the extent in which it reaches out to become more than it is today, only if it is really on the way and forgets what it is now, reaching out for what lies ahead of it."⁹⁵ If this is true, then while there are certain demands in Christian morality, it is really impossible to say exactly what it is that is demanded. It can be said that love is what is demanded.⁹⁶ But then love is always transcending itself into itself and also must "divide itself and enter into the different moments of existence which as such are not love."⁹⁷ Then Rahner suggests that the totality of man may be expressed in other ways than by means of love, e.g., faith or hope. This is true insofar as the totality is the very fullness of God and of man and hence is nameless. Rahner then concludes that the totality "will always be called love right to the end. But it itself demands the other names and is demanded by them."⁹⁸

The final question to be discussed here is: is

⁹³Ibid., p. 451.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 450.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 452.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 452-53.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 458.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 459.

what is morally done merely an attempt to realize universal norms in concrete situations or is there a unique individual dimension in a moral decision which goes beyond the universal norm to a particular demand applicable to a unique person? In response to this question Rahner outlines two approaches: that of a situation ethics which "denies the universal obligation (one which remains valid in every case) of material universal norms in the concrete individual case,"⁹⁹ and that approach which would conceive of conscience as a function of a person which would apply universal norms to the concrete situation.¹⁰⁰ The first approach is problematic because it limits man to be an individual who is "absolutely and in every respect unique."¹⁰¹ In regard to the second approach, Rahner asks if "what is morally done only the realization of universal norms."¹⁰² Rahner's response is an attempt to hold both poles of the above opposition. He writes:

. . . in so far as man belongs to the material world by his concrete activity, his activity is an instance and fulfillment of something universal which determines his actions as something different from the individual and opposed to it, that is, as a law expressed in universal propositions. In so far as the same man subsists in his own spirituality, his actions are always more than mere applications of the universal law to the casus in space and time: they have a

⁹⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 2, 218.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 220-21.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, p. 219.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, pp. 222.

substantial positive property and uniqueness which can no longer be translated into a universal idea and norm expressible in propositions constructed of universal notions. At least in his actions, man is really also (not only) individuum ineffabile, whom God has called by his name, a name which is and can only be unique, so that it really is worthwhile for this unique being as such to exist for all eternity.¹⁰³

Rahner's attempt to hold both of these poles--the universal and the particular or unique--is also expressed in an essay which discusses the distinction between principles and precepts. Catholic moral theology has been known as a morality based on universal principles which may and can be applied to individual cases. From this point of view the particular or the unique is subsumed under the universal. While Rahner does not deny the universal dimension, as pointed out above, he does argue that the particular cannot be reduced to the general.¹⁰⁴ Thus, he asks if we can

affirm that what is particular and individual at least when it is the personal spiritual decision of a spiritual subject, possesses a uniqueness that is not merely negative in relation to a universal and, therefore, multipliable essence . . . without their practicing a situation ethics on that account.¹⁰⁵

It is in response to this query that Rahner first discusses the distinction between a principle and a pre-

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 226-27.

¹⁰⁴Rahner, The Dynamic Element in the Church, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 111.

scription. Principles express a universal essence while prescriptions are directed to the concrete particular in as much as they are more than an instance of the universal.¹⁰⁶ While it is true that a prescription may be derived, in an individual case, from a principle, Rahner sees it to be more than an instance of the universal principle. Thus, he points out that in the actual experience of arriving at a moral decision, abstract reason is intrinsically incapable itself of arriving at the decision. But something else must be added to reason. Whether what is added is called inspiration or the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is precisely "the 'prescription' which bears on what is unique in time and place" which is added.¹⁰⁷

The question as to how one discerns the unique is still open. Rahner discusses this in another essay which is a commentary on relevant parts of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.¹⁰⁸ Rahner describes the Exercises as "guidance, regulations, instructions for something that is to be done by them. And what is to be done is to discover God's will in a decision to follow that will."¹⁰⁹ It is only after pointing out that Ignatius recognizes that the particular can be subsumed under the general because of the common nature of man and yet does not deter-

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 84ff.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 89.

mine man such that there must be the unique and unrepeatable, that Rahner begins to develop his approach to the discovery of that unique dimension in every moral decision.

The issue is discernment of the spirit. A common criterion is in terms of the effects of a decision which is acted upon or in other words, "by their fruits you will know them." Rahner sees this criteria as inadequate. He would rather seek the criteria in the decision itself. How does one know that the movement that comes in a decision is truly of God? Rahner asks:

Is there for Ignatius a fundamental evidence and certainty which is presupposed by the various rules and techniques for the Discernment of Spirits and which performs the same function as the first principles of logic and ontology do for the rest of knowledge and which, distinct from the rules, makes them possible, so that they are the application and regulated putting into practice of this fundamental certitude? The rules would thus represent as it were a supernatural logic and themselves refer back to their own 'first principle?'¹¹⁰

Rahner believes that this is what Ignatius has in mind, and he spends the remainder of his essay attempting to uncover the above mentioned "supernatural logic."

Rahner suggests that at the core of the Ignatian logic is an experience of God. This experience is not what is to be tested in the discernment of the spirit but rather is the starting point and the criterion of the

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 130.

test.¹¹¹ Rahner then elaborates on the nature of this experience which according to Ignatius is characterized as "consolation without previous cause" (consolación sin causa precedente).¹¹² The phrase "without previous cause" refers here not to any suddenness of the experience but rather to the absence of an object of the experience.¹¹³ Thus Rahner suggests:

The sin causa, therefore, means God himself, alone, not as given in a definite thought conceptually formulated, merely in ideas, not as to some degree 'represented' or linked to some other reality, even a religiously important one, such as the particular content of a resolution, a particular object of the Election and so on.¹¹⁴

Rahner then raises the question as to the nature and certainty of such an experience. The experience of God in question is not merely a question of a conceptual representation of God nor is an intuitive sight of God what is meant. Rather, Rahner writes:

It is an emergence into awareness . . . of transcendence as such, and as supernatural, and in it of God as the term of this anticipatory reaching out in aspiration. It is the becoming conscious of the transcendence which is the necessary condition of all cognition and presupposed in all certitude.¹¹⁵

The awareness has to do with God himself and not with any concept of God. It cannot be validated by any finite

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 131.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 132.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 134.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 136.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 148-49.

criteria but is self-validating. What, however, of the consolation spoken of above? Rahner points out that:

. . . it is not merely an added concomitant feeling, supplementary to this experience of the free transcendence of the whole mind and spirit. The latter is the consolation, because it is freedom itself and the positive taking possession of the spirit raised by grace to the supernatural in its pure being as such a spirit.¹¹⁶

However, the conclusion of the inquiry into the logic of Ignatius is not yet reached. The experience represented above is the starting point and foundation of the discernment. Rahner then asks

how this divine consolation of transcendence and immediacy is inserted as a criterion, in order to arrive at the particular knowledge which cannot be imparted by an ethics of the universal alone.¹¹⁷

The question can be put in another way: how can it be known that the object of a choice or a decision is or is not the will of God? The response that Rahner points to is not so much a principle as it is a process. He suggests that

by frequently confronting the object of Election with the fundamental consolation, the experimental test is made whether the two phenomena are in harmony, mutually cohere, whether the will to the object of Election under scrutiny leaves intact that pure openness to God in the supernatural experience of transcendence and even supports and augments it or weakens and obscures it.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 150.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 157.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 158.

The criteria of discernment is the consolation. The consolation, however, is not a static criterion but rather is an experiential test of the decision. Thus, the decision is made through a living it out to determine if it coheres "with the fundamental direction of the spirit of which a conscious awareness has been attained."¹¹⁹ If the motion is from God then there will be a

congruence between the divine consolation and the prospective putting of oneself in the situation of having chosen a certain object, or between the fundamental attitude and the particular decision.¹²⁰

This congruence would be signified by peace, joy, tranquility, quiet, gladness, interior joy, warmth, and favour rather than sharpness, tumult, and disturbance.¹²¹ It must finally be pointed out that the experience is not so much a deliberate evaluation as it is a divine motion experienced by the one seeking the discernment.

Thus, for Rahner there is a possibility for discovering a unique movement of the spirit which is not merely a case of the universal principle. This is not a situation ethics insofar as the universal is considered but neither is it a subsuming of the individual under the general.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 161.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 163.

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 163, 158.

Conclusion

The Roman Catholic authors take two general approaches to the meeting with Zen in regard to ethics. On the one hand, they discuss ethics in terms of discipline which can lead to union with God, or satori. This discipline is spoken of as detachment or nonattachment. On the other hand, they present the ethical dimension of enlightenment in terms of love. Merton recognizes love as essential to Zen. Graham related Christian agape with Buddhist karuna and Johnston finds Augustine's "love God and do what you will" as a parallel to the spontaneous doing of good in satori.

Rahner also exhibits this double aspect of ethics. He points out that a Christian ethics is ultimately derived from faith, yet also sees faith or salvation or integrity as the goal of ethics. In fact, he suggests that asceticism is the process of liberation of the divine in the human. Essential to the ascetical way is renunciation and indifference. The latter involves a sense of the relativity of everything that is not God. It is also spoken of as detachment. However, whether Rahner speaks of asceticism, renunciation or indifference, he sees the love of God as fundamental. Love of God, for Rahner, is the total integration of human existence. This love is equivalent to grace and to salvation and hence to freedom. Furthermore, the definitive act of love of God is love of

neighbor. Rahner points to love of the neighbor in general and in particular. Ethics does not simply mean the fulfillment of general principles but also the direct relationship with the neighbor at hand which involves both knowledge and love, which love is the fulfillment of knowledge.

Thus, for Rahner, ethics is directly related to the fundamental "experience" of the Christian, faith--the encounter between God and the human. This "experience" is such that both unity and diversity, oneness and manyness are affirmed. Ethics is not simply the way to salvation. It is also the expression or realization of salvation.

For Suzuki, the Buddhist precepts are expressions of the spirit of nonattachment which is actualized in the realization of the Buddha-Nature. This realization is not merely noetic in quality but also involves karuna or compassion. Compassion is the living out of satori. Karuna is not simply the way to satori. It is the very activity of the realized Buddha-Nature. This activity involves nonattachment. This nonattachment is not a dualistic separation but rather a being "no-self" which is the realization of the True Self. It is being a "man of no title" which is an availability for any title.

Thus, in Roman Catholicism and in Zen there are some fundamental similarities in regard to ethics. The

ethics of both traditions are grounded in their respective fundamental "experiences." These experiences can be described in terms of love and nonattachment. Love does not mean simple unity but rather unity and diversity. Thus, in ethics, both oneness and manyness are preserved. Finally, this love is lived both universally and particularly. It extends to all humans and to the one nearest.

If it is true that ethics in Zen and in Catholicism are grounded in their respective fundamental experiences, then, as has been pointed out above (and as will be developed more fully in Chapter IX), there is a basic difference between Zen and Catholicism insofar as the fundamental experience of Catholicism is the experience of God who is Being and the root experience of Zen is the realization of Oriental Nothingness which is a realization of the Nonbeing which is beyond being and nonbeing. Thus, while there may be some external similarity between the ethics of Zen and that of Catholicism, the grounds of these ethics are radically different. The Catholics who have encountered Zen have not faced this issue and hence have not met with Zen at its foundation.

CHAPTER VIII

DOCTRINE AND EXPERIENCE

In the beginning of his book Zen: Way to Enlightenment, Enomiya-Lassalle gives expression to the issue of this chapter. He writes:

To define it (satori) would mean that enlightenment can be grasped in well-known and familiar concepts. Yet enlightenment is essentially an inward experience which defies expression in unequivocal concepts or words. Therefore I shall not even try to give a proper definition.¹

This chapter takes up the question of the relation between doctrine or teaching or words or conceptualization on the one hand, and experience on the other hand. Writing about this problem is an aspect of the problem itself. An essential dimension of Catholicism is the centrality of the Word and hence of word and teaching and doctrine. This is evident from the importance Catholicism attaches to doctrine and also, more recently, to a renewed focusing upon the Bible. Zen, however, seems to favor silence over the word. There are times when it does not wish to speak and even proclaims (by silence) that it cannot speak or at the most can equivocate. Zen focus' on "experience."

¹Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, p. 11.

The word "experience" is used here as many of the authors use it, that is, as the opposite of conceptualization or of abstraction. But even here there is difficulty in Zen. Thus the context will be the source of interpretation of this word.

Roman Catholic Authors in Dialogue
with Zen

Enomiya-Lassalle does not attempt to define satori, especially because it is an "inward experience" which cannot be adequately expressed. Yet there are attempts to verbalize satori, which is almost impossible to describe. These attempts, according to Enomiya-Lassalle, are expressive of a particular Weltanschauung.² The very question of the possibility of a conceptualization of satori is a major dimension of satori itself. For satori is a "liberation from the world of concepts."³ In fact, according to Enomiya-Lassalle, dialectical thinking and logical reasoning are the greatest obstacles to achieving satori.⁴ It would seem then that conceptualization, logical reasoning, and dialectical thinking are contrary to the very spirit of Zen. But this is not exactly what Enomiya-Lassalle means. In a discussion of the relation between reason and intuition (which he implies, at least, is the Zen manner of

²Ibid., p. 35.

³Ibid., p. 28.

⁴Ibid., pp. 15-16.

knowing), he suggests that reason comes out of intuition and also returns to it or at least leads toward it. The implication here is that the knowledge gained through reason is incomplete and must be supplemented by the knowledge arrived at through intuition which itself is a knowledge of essence, a turning "toward being itself, which is whole and undifferentiated. Reason is analytical. Intuition is synthetic. Reason breaks up into parts. Intuition is unity. The former participates in a duality. The latter goes beyond duality to unity.⁵

According to Enomiya-Lassalle, this is not the case only in Zen. It is also true of Christian mysticism. An authentic mystical experience is not discursive as Zen also is not discursive. God cannot be expressed. He is incomprehensible, ineffable.⁶ Thus, in both the Zen "experience" and in the Christian mystical "experience," importance is given primarily to intuition. Reason is seen as simply one aspect of intuition.

A few years ago, William Johnston was reflecting on a dialogue that was to take place between Christians and Zen Buddhists in Kyoto. He tells us that he suggested to a Buddhist friend that it might be helpful to have a

⁵Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen - Meditation fur Christen, p. 34.

⁶Enomiya-Lassalle, Zen: Way to Enlightenment, pp. 77-78.

discussion of God and emptiness or void. The reply he received was as follows:

Do you really think that you can talk about nothingness, emptiness, void? Do you really think you can talk about God? Of course you can't. You are part of the void; you are part of nothingness, you are part of God. All is one.⁷

This response manifests the deep Zen appreciation of silence. Concerning this silence, Johnston suggests that it must be taken to heart by modern Christianity:

The silence of the Buddha is indeed a reminder to modern Christians that formulation of dogma and theological truths, however necessary it may be (and I believe it is necessary), is always imperfect and inadequate and only points to a realm of silence in which true wisdom is grasped.⁸

In regard to his experience of a Zen-Christian dialogue, Johnston believes that while there is little agreement on a common tenet whether it be philosophical, theological or religious, a meeting is possible at the experiential level. Thus, we are at the center of the problem which Johnston sees in terms of experience and silence and teachings.

Doctrine has central importance in Christianity. In one sense it is even more important than experience. Johnston suggests that this is an important difference between orthodox Christianity and Zen: "Orthodox Christianity puts less stress on mystical experience; and it

⁷Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 12.

⁸Johnston, "Buddhists and Christians Meet," p. 140.

does not build its doctrines on them."⁹ This emphasis on doctrine has the same source as methodology in Christian prayer which normally begins with meditation on the scriptures and on the life of Christ.¹⁰ Johnston is aware that this emphasis may be exaggerated. In Christian Zen, he tries to find a middle ground. After applying the Zen saying, "a finger pointing to the moon" to words, he speaks of the Christian Scriptures as a finger which we need and Christ as the moon. He then warns us not to get so much involved with the pointer that we miss the moon. He says further that the Christ who is the moon is not only the historical Christ but also the cosmic Christ. It is this cosmic Christ who "escapes all images, all thoughts, all ideas, and all pictures."¹¹ Christ is beyond all of these. Thus, there is a paradox in Johnston. The word or teaching is essential yet that about which the word speaks is ultimately unspeakable, unimaginable, and nonconceptual.

According to Johnston, Zen's emphasis on a "direct pointing to the soul" suggests that the spirit cannot be verbalized or systematized. Since the spirit is one, how could anyone really express it in concepts since conceptual thinking participates in the subject-object dualism.¹²

⁹ Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 15.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

¹¹ Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 52.

¹² Johnston, The Stillpoint, p. 85.

This thinking may also be described as discursive thinking which Zen attempts to transcend, e.g., Zen does not deny philosophy or history, but only that this philosophy or history, when reflected on in a discursive manner, does not help in the attainment of satori.¹³ The Buddha is silent.

While speaking of mysticism in general and Christian and Zen mystics in particular, Johnston points out that their language sacrifices discursive meditation in favor of intuitive knowledge. This intuitive knowledge, however, does not necessarily contradict ordinary reasoning but rather transcends it.¹⁴ Johnston also speaks of this kind of thinking as "vertical thinking," that is, a thinking which is void of concepts and images and plunges down to the core of one's being.¹⁵ It is this type of thinking which both produces and is characteristic of both Christian and Zen meditation and enlightenment.¹⁶

Closely related to "vertical thinking" is the Zen koan. The koan is a technique which is aimed at inducing Zen enlightenment, that is, the rejection of dualism, of subject-object relationship so that there is no longer any "I" and "it" or even "I" and "thou" but only "is." The koan is a mockery of reason insofar as it attempts to go

¹³Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 76.

beyond reason.¹⁷ In The Stillpoint Johnston says that "there is nothing equivalent to it in Christian mysticism."¹⁸ However, in some of his later writings, he begins to relate the Zen koan to the reading of the Christian Scriptures. After stating that enlightenment is not found simply by reading the Scriptures, he attempts to find a way of reading the Scriptures as a koan and also sees the koan approach as a help to the understanding of the Scriptures. He writes:

Holy Scripture itself is filled with koan.
 . . . These, of course, differ from the Zen koan in that they are not a mockery of reason. But they certainly go beyond reason and in many ways are as baffling as anything in Zen. Perhaps it could be argued that Christianity is one tremendous koan which makes the mind gasp with astonishment.¹⁹

It is possible that the koan can lead us into the depths of Scripture and to faith which, with the koan, is beyond rationality and in touch with our original face.²⁰

Commenting on the classic of British mysticism, the Cloud of Unknowing, Dom A. Graham says that mental concepts of God which are verbalized in theological propositions are inadequate by the very fact that they are concepts. They, however, are not worthless but "help to focus our

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 7, 84.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁹Johnston, "The Mystical Reading of Scripture: Some Suggestions from Buddhism," p. 60; also see Johnston, Christian Zen, pp. 61-65.

²⁰Johnston, Christian Zen, p. 67.

minds at the level of rational thought."²¹ Yet, Graham also recognizes that Christians ought "to attach less importance to formularies and to doctrinal statements."²² It is here where the Christian can learn from the Buddhist. While the Catholic may not disregard the Church's doctrinal propositions, he should see them for what they are--to be "seen through" that is, to be gone beyond to the reality they signify.²³

According to Graham, Thomas Aquinas seems to have reached a point which is similar to the Zen enlightenment. After trying to conceptualize much of Christian doctrine, he reached a point when he said that all he had written seemed like so much straw as compared with the reality. We can, Catholicism would agree with Zen, have no image of God nor can we conceptualize God.²⁴

This silent dimension of Zen can be spoken of as its attitude of directness and simplicity, which attitude pays more attention to things than to words. According to Graham there is also a directness in Catholicism. While speaking of the teacher-disciple relationship, he comments that "the assumption in Christianity

²¹Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 80.

²²Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist, p. 172.

²³Graham, Zen Catholicism, p. 103.

²⁴Graham, Conversations: Christian and Buddhist, p. 35.

and in Catholicism is that the individual consciousness is, in some way, however, obscurely, in direct contact with God, the Holy Spirit of Truth."²⁵ Thus, there is a directness in both Zen and Catholicism, though it may be interpreted differently by each tradition.

In a previous chapter, when the question of the ground of a dialogue between Zen and Roman Catholicism was discussed, it was pointed out that, for Thomas Merton, Zen is not theology nor can one deal with Zen as if they were dealing with Catholic dogma.²⁶ Yet Merton was unsure of this, for while speaking of the relation between Buddhist and Christian experience in relation to doctrine, he pointed out that the doctrine is about the experience and moreover, that because of Suzuki's openness to the dogma of the Trinity, the most significant meeting ground may yet be seen as theology nurtured in contemplation.²⁷ The problem at issue here is the relation between doctrine and experience, whether one or the other is primary in the Catholic and Zen approaches to them. Merton also raises the question while discussing the Zen koan meditation and Christian grace. He writes:

²⁵Ibid., p. 141.

²⁶Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. ix.

²⁷Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 57.

The true koan meditation is one in which the disciple comes to be so identified with the koan that he experiences his whole self as a riddle without an answer. This may be for him an utterly hopeless experience, but if he continues to struggle he may one day suddenly accept himself precisely as he is, as a riddle without an answer that is communicable to others in an objective manner.²⁸

The present concern is Merton's pointing to the objective noncommunicability of the experience of the koan.

While there are implicit doctrinal elements in Zen, Merton says that they are secondary to the inexpressible Zen experience.²⁹ In fact, the nonunderstanding of this has been the source of an obstacle to a Western understanding of Zen. There is a Western tendency to focus on the explanation which is accidental in Zen rather than the experience which is essential.³⁰ However, explanation is not ruled out entirely. This is implied by Merton when he says: "In Zen the experience is always prior not in time but in importance."³¹ Merton emphasizes that Zen is not easily communicable.³² "Zen explains nothing. It just sees."³³ But if you cannot find Zen satori in the very middle of concepts, you cannot find it at all. For "Zen is your everyday mind,"³⁴ albeit, an "everyday mind"

²⁸Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 228.

²⁹Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 35.

³⁰Ibid., p. 38.

³¹Ibid., p. 45.

³²Ibid., p. 46.

³³Ibid., p. 55.

³⁴Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 33.

which has a "built-in ejector" by which the explanation (whether it be a philosophical or theological one) can be "flung out from the conceptual apparatus into the Void."³⁵

The situation in Christianity would seem to be the exact opposite. Merton writes:

For Christianity begins with revelation. Though it would be misleading to classify this revelation as a "doctrine" and an "explanation" . . . it is nevertheless communicated to us in words, in statements, and everything depends on the believer's accepting the truth of these statements.³⁶

This concern with doctrine can become an obsession. Once this happens "people forget that the heart of Catholicism, too, is a living experience of unity in Christ which far transcends all conceptual formulations."³⁷ Yet Catholic Christianity still remains a religion of the Word.³⁸ While not neglecting the experience, the Christian mystic transcends the individual psychological level and experiences "theologically with the Church."³⁹ But to hear the Word fully and to receive it means much more than assent to dogmatic propositions. It means to experience the Word in a complete selfemptying, a kenosis.⁴⁰

For Merton, there is a certain similarity in Zen and Catholicism in regard to the relation of doctrine and

³⁵Merton, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, p. 44.

³⁶Ibid., p. 39.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., p. 40.

³⁹Ibid., p. 46.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 56.

experience. Both are present in both traditions. While Zen emphasizes experience, it does not deny that reading and study could contribute to Zen training so long as this reading does not get in the way of a direct grasp of life.⁴¹ The same would be true for Christianity, though she places greater emphasis on doctrines than Zen does.

Peter Kreeft gives expression to this difference of emphasis in Zen and Christianity. He asks: "Is logos (words, language, reason, concepts) a value or a dis-value?"⁴² After suggesting that it seems that Christianity takes logos right into Ultimate Reality while Zen sees it as the primary tool of the ego in blocking enlightenment, he says that we are involved in a difference of emphasis. He relates this question to that of the infinite and the finite, the transcendent and immanent. Kreeft finds it strange that Christianity which emphasizes the infinite's transcendence of the world would put emphasis on its immanence in words and vice-versa in Zen.⁴³

Enomiya-Lassalle speaks of doctrine and experience in terms of reasoning and conceptualization and intuition. Both Zen and Christian mysticism emphasize intuition over reason which is seen simply as one aspect of intuition. Reasoning and conceptualization participate in a duality while intuition is synthetic and hence transcends duality

⁴¹Merton, Mystics and Zen Masters, p. 220.

⁴²Kreeft, p. 533.

⁴³Ibid.

in an undifferentiated unity. Hence both Zen satori and Christian experience of God are ineffable. Johnston sees "vertical thinking" as characteristic of both Zen and Christian mysticism. Vertical thinking reaches to the core of one's being and is void of concepts and images. It does not contradict reason but transcends it to an intuitive knowledge. The emphasis is somewhat different in Zen and Christianity. In Christianity teaching is essential yet that about which it speaks is recognized as ineffable. In Zen there is no denial of conceptual thinking but a recognition of its limitation insofar as it is of no help in the attainment of satori. While recognizing that doctrine and teaching about God help to focus our minds, Graham suggests that Catholics can learn from Zen that these doctrines are inadequate and to be "seen through" to the reality they signify. While Merton sees different emphases in Zen and Catholicism in reference to doctrine and experience, he points out that for both Zen and Catholicism experience comes first and the doctrine is about the experience. Kreeft also sees a difference of emphasis in Zen and Christianity. While Christianity emphasizes the "word," that "word" reaches into the Absolute. He finds it strange that Zen would emphasize the immanent dimension of life and de-emphasize words and concepts while Christianity emphasizes the transcendent dimension of the infinite yet hallows its immanence in words.

Zen on Doctrine and Experience

Many previous chapters have alluded both directly and indirectly to the problematic of doctrine or teachings in Zen. In the first chapter it was shown that Zen is fundamentally a matter of "personal experience." This section elaborates on this theme and also asks the following questions: What is the place of teachings in Zen? What is the role of tradition in Zen? What is the relation between teachings and experience in Zen? Many themes which have already been discussed will enter into the response to these questions, e.g., the Zen attitude toward mediums in a person's approach to life. The major medium is language and its relation to thought (conceptualization, reasoning, and logic). Finally, the means by which satori is communicated (the very language used here is problematic in Zen), especially the mondo and the koan are looked at.

Can satori be adequately explained? Can a Zen master lead a disciple to satori through an explanation of it? Suzuki responds to these questions in many ways. He says, first of all, in general:

Cannot Zen be so explained that a master can lead all his pupils to enlightenment through explanation? Is satori something that is not at all capable of intellectual analysis? Yes, it is an experience which no amount of explanation or argument can make communicable to others unless the latter themselves had it previously. . . . There is in Zen nothing to explain, nothing to

teach, that will add to your knowledge. Unless it grows out of yourself no knowledge is really yours, it is only borrowed plumage.⁴⁴

Thus, no matter how much satori or Zen is explained, it is not "understood" unless it is really yours, unless it is grasped from within, that is, unless the explanation comes out of you whether you are the one explaining or the one to whom it is explained. Suzuki writes:

No ideas are intelligible to those who have no backing of experience . . . Without this experience nothing relative to its profound working will ever be accurately and therefore efficiently grasped. The foundation of all concepts is simple, unsophisticated experience.⁴⁵

In other words, life comes first and thought comes after life. A question arises here as to the relation of life and thought. If the human is a thinking species, then is it not somewhat analytic to separate thought from life? Generally, what Suzuki means by thought is the process of conceptualization, reasoning, and logic. There is a tendency in the West to reduce life to these dimensions. Suzuki wishes to put them in their place rather than to deny them entirely.

One might think that Zen is to be found in the teachings of the Buddha. But Buddhism "is not only Buddha's teachings but Buddha himself."⁴⁶ Thus, there is not a denial of teachings but rather a challenge to enter into the

⁴⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 92.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 33.

⁴⁶Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 13.

very spirit of the teachings by experiencing for ourselves what the Buddha experienced. Suzuki continues: "In other words, Buddha's teaching must become an expression of our own experience."⁴⁷ This realization is what is called satori.

Suzuki often seems to debunk the sacred writings of Buddhism.⁴⁸ However, he does not so much negate their value but he gives them their own special value. The scriptures are not final. They are tentative and provisional.⁴⁹ They point the way, but also, when the Reality is grasped, these same pointers are enfleshed, as it were, with the experience. They are not detached from the experience. Suzuki points out that:

There must be a certain way in which silence and eloquence become identical, that is, where negation and assertion are unified in a higher form of statement. When we attain to this we know Zen.⁵⁰

In this statement "experience" can be substituted for "silence" and "scriptures" for "eloquence." The way to the silence can be pointed out by the scriptures. When silence is realized then the very scriptural word itself comes alive. Thus, Suzuki writes:

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 4; also see Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 33.

⁴⁹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 44.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 70.

What one thinks or reads is always qualified by the preposition "of" or "about" and does not give us the thing itself. . . . But a first acquaintance with the sutras is needed to see the way pointed and know where to look for the thing itself. Without this pointing we may be at a loss how and where to concentrate our efforts. Therefore say the sutras, "I am both the director (or leader) and the truth itself."⁵¹

Directness, a characteristic of satori, is relevant in the present context. "To see directly into one's Original Nature, this is Zen."⁵² When Suzuki says that life comes before thought he is speaking of Zen's direct perception of Reality which perception has also been called mediumless perception. He writes:

By personal experience it is meant to get at the fact at first hand and not through any intermediary, whatever this may be. . . . Zen abhors⁵³ anything coming between the fact and ourselves.

The movement is often seen as going from some medium to the Reality. According to Hisamatsu the movement is better expressed in the opposite manner. To see immediately is not merely seeing what is seen as much as it is the Reality awakening out of itself in me and seeing Itself. Hisamatsu writes:

The immediate Awakening of Zen is . . . not of the direction toward the One or the Formless; it is rather the One or the Formless Awakening

⁵¹Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism. Second Series, p. 54.

⁵²Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 88.

⁵³Suzuki, Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series, p. 19.

out of itself as the self-expressing creative subject.⁵⁴

The mediums which are spoken of, especially, are those connected with language, conceptualization, reasoning, and logic. Language is a medium of expression which Zen recognizes as limited. Suzuki points out that "as soon as Zen appeals to language to express itself, it inevitably becomes the victim of all the inconveniences, all the restrictions, and all the contradictions which are inherent in language."⁵⁵ Thus, Zen does not rely on language as is said in the basic expression of Zen: "Not relying on words or letters; an independent Self-transmitting apart from any teaching."⁵⁶ According to Hisamatsu, Zen finds its authority in that which is "prior to" or the "inner source of that which is within the teaching."⁵⁷ Suzuki suggests that if Zen is of man, it cannot help but use language.⁵⁸ Zen does not object to language as such. It simply recognizes that there is a realm "in which our words fail to communicate the events taking place there."⁵⁹ Suzuki writes:

We human beings cannot live without language, for we are so made that we can sustain our existence

⁵⁴Hisamatsu, Zen and the Fine Arts, p. 21.

⁵⁵Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 28.

⁵⁶Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 22.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 26.

⁵⁸Suzumi, Zen Buddhism, p. 246.

⁵⁹Suzuki, Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist, p. 48.

only in group life. Love is the essence of humanity, love needs something to bestow itself upon; human beings must live together in order to lead a life of mutual love. Love to be articulate requires a means of communication, which is language. In as much as Zen is one of the most significant human experiences, one must resort to language to express it to others as well as to oneself.⁶⁰

The language of Zen, however, has its own character. The language, e.g., of the Zen master is a kind of exclamation arising directly from his inner experiences.⁶¹ What is said is experienced. It will not be grasped or understood unless the hearer has "had" a Zen experience.⁶² In Zen, ultimately, "experience and expression are one."⁶³

However, if language is merely conceptualization, Zen goes beyond it. In some places Suzuki gives the impression that Zen will have nothing to do with conceptualization, e.g., he says: "Zen defies all concept-making."⁶⁴ In another place he says that satori which is turned into a concept ceases to be satori.⁶⁵ The context of this statement makes it clearer. Here Suzuki is speaking of how a conceptual presentation of satori does not make sense to someone who has not realized satori. Zen, again, does not deny con-

⁶⁰ Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 6.

⁶¹ Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 125.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 6.

⁶⁴ Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 42.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 92.

ceptualization but rather sees itself as the foundation of all concepts.⁶⁶ Zen is not confined to concepts but makes concepts possible.⁶⁷

Hisamatsu, while recognizing the limits of conceptualization, points out that when Oriental Nothingness is being treated from a scholarly point of view, there is a need to be conceptually precise or the scholarly objective would fail.⁶⁸ He takes his argument right into the depths of sunyata where conceptualization is not opposed to non-conceptualization in a dualistic manner, but where there is a thoroughgoing abstraction which is the very Self-expression of the Formless Self.⁶⁹

According to Suzuki, the same could be said about the reasoning process. Reason stops short of satori.⁷⁰ It can even hinder the person from coming into direct contact with himself.⁷¹ Yet, while Zen prajna is beyond reason, it is also in the very process of reasoning.⁷²

A third medium which Suzuki treats contains the

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 33.

⁶⁷Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 259.

⁶⁸Hisamatsu, "Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," p. 66.

⁶⁹Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 35.

⁷⁰Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 185.

⁷¹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 44.

⁷²Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 187.

previous two. This is logic. Zen teaches us to go beyond logic which involves the duality of subject and object.⁷³

Suzuki points out why Zen is so strong in its attack on logic when he writes:

The reason why Zen is so vehement in its attack on logic . . . is that logic has so pervasively entered into life as to make most of us conclude that logic is life and without it life has no significance.⁷⁴

In another place he puts this in other words when he writes:

"The great fault with us all is that we force logic on facts whereas it is facts themselves that create logic."⁷⁵ Thus, Zen does not repudiate logic in itself but only insofar as it is taken to be a replacement for life. Logic has its place and its consistency is not final in itself unless that consistency arises from life.⁷⁶

The final question in this section is the place of tradition in Zen. If Zen is mediumless, then it can be asked, how is it communicated? If communication is understood as a passing of something from one person to another, then Zen is not communicated at all. Zen, insofar as it is the Buddha-Nature is not passed from one person to another. It is rather the actualization of the Buddha-Nature who we

⁷³Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p. 360.

⁷⁴Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 64.

⁷⁵Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 224.

⁷⁶Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 67.

already are.

The Zen masters, according to Suzuki, however, recognize the social dimension of human existence. It is known that humans do make use of some mediums to express themselves. Thus, there has evolved a system of mondo, and the koan, which act as a catalyst in the pupil seeking enlightenment.⁷⁷ The literal meaning of mondo is "question and answer." This is not a dialogue in the general understanding of the word, that is a conversation between two persons. The mondo is particularly Zen, and as such attempts to reduce the shortcomings of language to a minimum. The questions and answer, which is the mondo, are not separate. Both come from the same root. When the question is asked or taken hold of at the root, the answer is already there. It is then that there is no distinction between the questioner and the question.⁷⁸ This is the independent Self-transmitting of Zen.

According to Suzuki, the koan was developed as a means by which the Zen master "would force the evolution of Zen consciousness in the minds of their less endowed disciples."⁷⁹ The koan, which is not so much a riddle as it is an anecdote or mondo, has as its objective the shutting off of rationalization in order to arouse the Zen

⁷⁷Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 28.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 14-15, 30.

⁷⁹Suzuki, Introduction to Zen, p. 102.

consciousness in the disciple. In the end, however, this consciousness itself which is the Buddha-Nature or True Self is the final or ultimate authority which grounds all methods and all mediums in the attempt to awaken Zen enlightenment. Thus, while there is a strong sense of tradition in Zen, this tradition itself, as well as all mediums such as language, is grounded in the authority of the Buddha-Nature.

Rahner on Doctrine and Experience

Rahner's approach to the significance of doctrine or teachings in Christianity manifests a sense of its importance and of its limitations.⁸⁰ He views his own task as a theologian as a task which takes its starting point from the doctrinal pronouncements of the Church.⁸¹ Yet he is also aware that the dogmatic statement or formula "is never the thing itself and remains inadequate in comparison with it."⁸² It has been seen that revelation is not the communication of dogmatic propositions but rather a saving happening.⁸³ Rahner also points out that theological propositions, while they allow us clarity, are not merely an end but also a beginning. He writes:

⁸⁰Karl Rahner, The Christian of the Future (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 30.

⁸¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 2, 2-3.

⁸²Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, 85.

⁸³Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 48.

It follows from the nature of human knowledge of truth and from the nature of divine truth itself, that any individual truth, above all one of God's truths, is beginning and emergence, not conclusion and end. In the last resort any individual human perception of truth only has meaning as beginning and promise of the knowledge of God.⁸⁴

Also, while speaking of the ultimate meaning of Christianity, Rahner points out that this is not merely a proclamation which happens primarily in doctrinal propositions, but rather in events, primarily in the event in which God communicates himself to us, that is, the event of grace. This is also the primary meaning of tradition or the handing down which, again, is not merely the transmission of propositional teaching but rather the handing over by God to man of himself in Christ.⁸⁵

The transmission involves a being grasped by God who is mystery which mystery permeates Christianity such that the Christian always goes beyond the defined and conceptualized.⁸⁶ There is a point of realization that the absoluteness of God is proper to man.⁸⁷ Rahner puts this in another way when he speaks of reason and mystery. He writes:

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 149.

⁸⁵Rahner, Theological Investigations 6, pp. 99-100.

⁸⁶Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 61.

⁸⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 43.

Mystery is not merely a way of saying that reason has not yet completed its victory. It is the goal where reason arrives when it attains its perfection by becoming love.⁸⁸

Furthermore, mystery is the very ground of man, a ground which is an abyss which is unable to be measured by any formula.⁸⁹ Hence, the will of God, who is the holy mystery, cannot be known by rational reflection of the believer.⁹⁰ A direct presence to God himself is the ground for any activities of reason.⁹¹ Man really "knows God only when he (man) is reduced to silence and adoration by the experience of this mystery."⁹² The mystery who God is, is not grasped by us, nor is it present to us by our speech about it but rather it is present by grasping us.⁹³ When we speak of this mystery in theological statements, we are pointed beyond them into the mystery of God.⁹⁴ It is true that we may speak of this mystery but this speech will not catch or discover the secret of the mystery. It, rather, has one purpose which is to force us out of the lucid

⁸⁸Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 43.

⁸⁹Rahner, Grace in Freedom, p. 195.

⁹⁰Rahner, The Dynamic Element in the Church, p. 94; also see Theological Investigations 6, 52-53.

⁹¹Rahner, Theological Investigations 5, 209.

⁹²Rahner, Theological Investigations 7, 61.

⁹³Rahner, Christian in the Market Place, p. 114.

⁹⁴Karl Rahner and Karl Lehmann, Kerygma and Dogma (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 96-97.

clarity of our existence into the mystery of God. In fact, Rahner says that theology is really theology "only when the theology of concepts and comprehension raises itself and is transformed into the theology of overwhelming incomprehensibility."⁹⁵

This does not mean, however, that in speech about God we must be satisfied with impreciseness and vagueness.⁹⁶ Rahner also points to an intrinsic value to concepts. He writes:

In the long run the correctness of our arguments and deductions from the propositions of faith can only proceed from the heart of a faith known by being lived, that faith which still possesses all in undivided unity and totality. But this original faith can only be explicated when we attend to the binding formulations in which it has never failed to express itself, and necessarily in objective propositional form. Neither is wholly possible without the other.⁹⁷

In any religious concept, God is given to us insofar as the concept points beyond itself, and God is given to us in the meaning of what is said. This is Rahner's way of speaking of transcendent and categorical knowledge of God.⁹⁸

Words and language have much value for Rahner. While pointing out some requisites for hearing the word of the gospel, he describes words as vehicles through which

⁹⁵Rahner, Everyday Faith, p. 190.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 189.

⁹⁷Rahner, Theological Investigations 1, 76.

⁹⁸Rahner, Christian in the Market Place, p. 116.

the mystery is present. Words arise from the mystery and point back to it.⁹⁹ He writes:

In every word, the gracious incarnation of God's own abiding Word and so of God himself can take place, and all true hearers of the word are really listening to the inmost depths of every word, to know if it becomes suddenly the word of eternal love by the very fact that it expresses man and his world.¹⁰⁰

There are also words which unite and words which divide. The latter attempt to explain the whole by breaking it up. The former can "make an individual thing transparent so that we can see through to the Infinity of all reality."¹⁰¹ Finally, Rahner speaks of "great words," that is, words which are indefinable, words which are either the last possible of all words or at least the final point of man's reflexive selfinterpretation.¹⁰² What has been proclaimed about Jesus as Word, as Savior, can also be said about every word, especially the great words. Salvation comes through the Word.¹⁰³

Thus, Rahner attempts to articulate a paradox. On the one hand, the word is always limited in its power in

⁹⁹Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 358-59.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 362.

¹⁰¹Karl Rahner, "Priest and Poet," The Word: Readings in Theology, Compiled at The Canisianum, Innsbruck (New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1964), p. 4.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 9.

face of the incomprehensible, nonconceptual, unthematic mystery which is called God. On the other hand, it is the very word that saves. This approach to doctrine becomes clearer through a presentation of Rahner's theology of the symbol.

Rahner wishes to uncover the significance of symbol from an ontological point of view. He begins by distinguishing "real symbols" from artificial and natural symbols. The real symbol is the highest and most primordial manner in which one reality can represent another.¹⁰⁴ The basic principle of Rahner's approach to the symbol is that "all beings are by their nature symbolic because they necessarily 'express' themselves in order to attain their own nature."¹⁰⁵ This is so insofar as all beings are multiple and can be the expression of another in the unity of the multiple. Insofar as being is one, the multiples of this one must have an inner agreement with each other. Rahner writes:

Every being as such possesses a plurality as an intrinsic element of its significant unity: this plurality constitutes itself, by virtue of its origin from an original unity, as the way to fulfil the unity, . . . in such a way that that which is originated and different is in agreement with its origin and hence has . . . the character of expression or 'symbol' with regard to its origin. . . . Being is of itself symbolic because it necessarily expresses itself.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Rahner, Theological Investigations 4, 225.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 224.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 229.

Being, which is one, is one insofar as it goes out of itself, expresses itself in a plurality. This expression of itself is that by which the being constitutes itself, realizes itself. Thus, by expressing itself being comes into itself or is present to itself. The plural is the symbol of the one such that the one is not one without its expression in the plural. Each being is symbol in that to be itself it must express itself.

For Rahner, the whole of theology would be incomprehensible if it is not a theology of the symbol.¹⁰⁷ The Father is Father insofar as he projects an image of himself, the Logos or "word" of the Father.¹⁰⁸ The Logos, in his humanity, is truly the revelatory symbol in which the Father expresses himself to the world.¹⁰⁹ The Church is the symbol of the Logos, that is, is the presence of the incarnate Word in space and time.¹¹⁰ Finally, the sacraments concretize and actualize the Church in the life of the individual.¹¹¹ Thus, the Father is present in the Son who is present in the Church which is actualized in the sacraments which, in the end, mediate God's selfcommunication in such a way that it is immediate. For the sacraments, the Church, the Logos present the Father immediately insofar as they are symbols

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 235.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 235-36.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 239.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 240.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 241.

which are essential to the Father in his being as Father. A word or teaching, then, is a symbol such that the God of whom the teaching attempts to speak is present in that teaching. His presence is the presence of the incomprehensible mystery so that the teaching itself points incomprehensibly to incomprehensibility. Or, God's otherness is founded upon the incomprehensibility of his nearness.

Conclusion

Each of the Roman Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen perceive a paradox in regard to the relation between doctrine and experience. Enomiya-Lassalle suggests that neither satori nor God can be expressed. Both are ineffable and incomprehensible. Johnston and Graham perceive doctrine or concepts as imperfect yet also as pointers. To both men, doctrine is essential but it also must be seen through. In the end, however, one cannot conceptualize God or satori. Merton tries to pull doctrine and experience together when he says that the heart of Roman Catholicism is a living experience of the Word.

From the point of view of Suzuki, satori is an experience which cannot be communicated through an explanation even though the teaching is an attempt to express the experience. Yet, he does not entirely deny the power of teaching insofar as he says that the sutras are a way to the silence of satori which silence, however, gives life to the sutra itself, that is, Zen is not a denial of conceptuali-

zation but is that which makes it possible. Suzuki also says that the experience and the expression are one. This is suggested in order to avoid the duality of word and silence. In the end, however, the Buddha-Nature is the ultimate authority rather than teachings. This is also qualified insofar as teachings can be an actualization of the Buddha-Nature. Hisamatsu sees the ultimate authority in Zen to be the Buddha-Nature. This is within teachings which ultimately can be seen as the "Self-expression of the Formless Self." Thus, in Zen, teaching or conceptualization is not denied. My seeing is Reality awakening out of itself in me and seeing itself. To see in concepts can be the Buddha-Nature awakened and seeing itself.

Rahner conceives of tradition as not simply the handing down of propositional statements but the handing over by God of himself to man. Can this correspond to the Zen Self-expression of the Formless Self? For Rahner the formulations and experience are mutually interrelated so that one is not possible without the other. This is founded especially on the ontological meaning of the symbol which is that all being expresses itself in order to attain its own nature. This could correspond to Hisamatsu's articulation of the Fundamental Subject which is actively nothing. Thus, there is here a major point of meeting between Zen and Roman Catholicism, even though the very expressions themselves are different. The teachings may be different but the Reality

which is present in the teaching is essentially the same, again reflecting the perennial paradox of the one and the many, and the fundamental similarity between the God of Christianity and the Buddha-nature in Zen.

CHAPTER IX

ONE AND MANY: BEING OR NONBEING?

This final chapter will include two parts. The first part will be a summary of the previous chapters in which the theme of the one and the many was central. In the following summary the advances that could be made in the encounter between Zen and Catholicism in terms of the central theme of the one and the many are assembled. In the second part of the chapter, a critical question will be raised from the points of view of the Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu and of Thomistic philosophical theology. This critical question will challenge the ground of the meeting to date and offer a necessary nuance.

PART I

ONE AND MANY

The fundamental purpose of this dissertation was fourfold: to present an historical analysis of the meeting between Roman Catholics and Zen Buddhists from a Roman Catholic point of view with emphasis on the twentieth century meetings, to distill the points of correspondence thus made possible, to raise some further ques-

tions from a Catholic perspective that might enable the meeting to proceed still further, and to do all this within the theme of the one and the many as a fundamental motif of the dialogue which has taken place and as a fruitful focus of the dialogue as it continues to unfold. It is this issue of the one and the many that integrates many of the questions that have already been asked and also points to many questions that still might be pursued in the meeting.

The theme of the one and the many is fundamental to the theology of Karl Rahner. Louis Roberts points out that it is the hermeneutical principle of Rahner's entire theology. Furthermore, the motif of the one and the many is explicitly discussed by the Zen Buddhists, Suzuki and Hisamatsu, and holds a central position in their articulation of the ground of Zen.

Any discussion of a meeting between two religious traditions immediately touches on the theme of the one and the many. The questions asked in this meeting are commonly: Is there any common ground between the two traditions and what are the differences between them? To ask if there is a common ground is to ask if there is oneness. To ask about differences is to wonder about manyness or differentiation. Thus, the theme of the one and the many is present even before the meeting takes place and an assumption as to the relative importance of oneness and manyness is

implicit in the attitudes that the participants in the meeting bring to the meeting. For example, if a person comes to the meeting with the presupposition that there is a common element in all religious traditions and that the point of the meeting is to uncover this common element, that person assumes a fundamental unity in religion. On the other hand, if a person comes to the meeting with the assumption that there is always a difference between religious traditions and that the point of the meeting is a candid yet graceful uncovering of the difference(s), then that person assumes a fundamental diversity or manyness among religions. A third approach is also possible. A person can enter the meeting without assuming that there is a common ground or that there are necessarily differences. Here there is no assumption as to oneness or manyness of traditions. A fourth possibility is that the person assumes both a oneness and a manyness. In the third approach the point of the meeting would be to find out what there is to discover. In this approach there is no assumption as to a fundamental unity or diversity. The fourth approach would assume that the religious traditions are both united and diverse. If the meeting between persons of varying religious traditions begins precisely on the question of the one and the many, then the basic assumption can be uncovered and also the way the meeting might proceed can be determined. Thus, the theme of the

one and the many can be a catalyst for the meeting between two religious traditions. It has been a major point of this dissertation to suggest that this theme has entered into a meeting between Zen and Catholicism and is a fundamental issue of the ongoing dialogue between these two traditions.

It was seen in Chapter II, a chapter devoted to the theme of the one and the many, that a variety of approaches are taken toward this theme. Johnston and Kreeft suggested that the central issue of the meeting between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism is the question of monism and dualism. In Catholicism, this problem is expressive of the way one understands the relationship between God and the world and the relationship between God and the human. Is the human to find complete fulfillment in an identity with God which is the only reality or is there a significant difference between God and the human such that they remain separate? If the former is true, then Catholicism is expressive of a monism. If the latter is true then Catholicism is expressive of a dualism. The former is unity. The latter is diversity. The former is oneness. The latter is manyness. Johnston and Zaehner find that Catholicism does not emphasize unity or diversity, oneness or manyness, but affirms both poles of this dialectic. Graham attempts to describe this relationship in terms of a co-naturalness between God and the human. Both

Suzuki and Hisamatsu affirm oneness and manyness in Zen. The same is true of the Rahnerian understanding of the mystery of Christianity.

Zen is often interpreted by Catholics in dialogue with it as a monism, that is, as founded on oneness. Christianity is often understood as an emphasis on manyness or on duality. A few of the authors who are in dialogue with Zen agree that Zen emphasizes oneness. However, they suggest that Christianity, and more specifically, Roman Catholicism, emphasizes both oneness and manyness, or unity and diversity. It is a point of this dissertation to suggest that, after a consideration of the writings of Rahner, Suzuki, and Hisamatsu, Zen Buddhism and Roman Catholicism attempt to hold both poles of the dialectic of the one and the many. The meeting between Zen and Roman Catholicism, then, attempts to discover possible correspondences and/or differences in the articulation and the experience of the theme of the one and the many in such a way that both poles of this dialectic are affirmed. The point here is not so much that both these religious traditions necessarily have the same thing to say about the one and the many as it is to point to this theme as an underlying motif of an ongoing meeting.

The theme of the one and the many is not simply abstract but is also an expression of a variety of life

experiences, including both psychological and religious experience. For example, the experience of alienation is expressive of manyness and the experience of integrity reflects oneness. In Chapter V, which discussed Zen and Christian consciousness, a distinction was made between the individual psychological ego and the True Self. Often Zen realization and Christian salvation are understood as a denial or negation of the psychological ego in the realization of the True Self (Zen) or in salvation (Christianity). This interpretation of Zen and Christianity would emphasize the dimension of oneness as most fundamental. It was pointed out, however, that, according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu, this understanding of Zen would be a duality. Zen, according to these men, does not affirm oneness over duality. Zen, rather, is a "direct seeing" which does not affirm either oneness or duality. Rahner, who perceives Christian consciousness as an immediate vision of God, suggests that this experience includes both oneness and manyness. He points out that God's distance (a distinction between God and the human, duality, manyness) is nothing else than the incomprehensibility of God's all penetrating nearness (oneness of God and the human). Thus, neither Christianity (according to Rahner) nor Zen (according to Suzuki and Hisamatsu) affirm that self-denial or negation of the ego is the way to the highest "reality," but rather the highest reality both affirms and denies the

psychological ego. In Zen this affirmation-negation can be expressed as a Great-Death-Great-Birth and in Christianity as a ~~Death~~-Resurrection. Thus, Zen and Roman Catholicism point to the same "reality" through their differing "experience." This similarity strongly suggests a significant correspondence between the Christian immediate vision of God and the Zen realization of the Buddha-Nature.

This question of Zen and Christian consciousness brings us to the issue of the articulation of Zen and Christianity. Christianity is often understood as an emphasis on articulation or doctrine or word. Zen is often understood as a denial of the possibility of an articulation of the realization of the True Self, or in other words, as an emphasis on silence. An emphasis one way or the other, however, would be a dualism. To emphasize articulation or silence would be to distinguish silence from articulation and hence give expression to the duality of word-silence. To transcend this duality, it could be asked if there is any silence in speech or if there is any articulation in silence.

Rahner, Suzuki, and Hisamatsu attempt to hold both silence and articulation. While they are quite sensitive to the inability to speak about "ultimate reality," they are also sensitive to the possibility of "ultimate reality" being immanent in speech or the word.

Another way of speaking of the above duality be-

tween speech and silence is in terms of the distinction between theology and experience. To make this distinction itself is to fall into a duality (manyness). Rahner suggests that Christian theology is an inner moment of faith (the fundamental Christian experience). The same would be true of the understanding of the articulation of Zen by Suzuki and Hisamatsu for whom the articulation of Zen may itself be manifestive of the realization of Zen. The pursuit of this question is one more attempt to deal with the issue of the one and the many. In this instance, the issue can be expressed in terms of the mediacy (expressive of manyness) of the word in communicating the "ultimate" and the immediacy (oneness) of the realization of the "ultimate." Christianity is often understood as affirming the mediacy while Zen is often interpreted as an emphasis upon immediacy. Both of these traditions, however, can be understood as affirming both mediacy and immediacy insofar as both traditions affirm the one and the many. Thus, a discussion of the possibility of any discussion of Zen or Roman Catholicism can lead to the theme of the one and the many. The word can lead to silence which itself can be truly silence only when it breaks out in a word which is truly word only when it also contains silence. In terms of the one and the many this last statement can be expressed: the many can lead to the one which itself can be truly one only when it

breaks out into the many which is truly many only when it also contains the one.

Up to this point the motif of the one and the many has been spoken of in general terms (an emphasis on oneness). It is now necessary to point out that this theme is also explicit or implicit in the central doctrines of Christianity which would also suggest that it is present in the experience which grounds these doctrines. According to Rahner, the central doctrines of Christianity are the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Grace.

William Johnston has suggested that the experience of unity and diversity or of the one and the many is often interpreted by Christians in terms of their belief in the Trinity. Thomas Merton wonders whether or not there is some correspondence between the Christian Trinity and the Zen articulation of a triadic constitution of existence as Being, Acting, and Seeing. Rahner also perceives the Trinity as the supreme mode of unity and diversity or the one and the many. He bases this on his realization that for Being to be one it must emerge into plurality and for plurality to be truly plurality it must be founded on the one. Rahner also distinguishes between the "immanent" Trinity and the "economic" Trinity, the Trinity from the "God-ward side" and the Trinity from the "human-ward side." While he does perceive that these two approaches to the Trinity can be understood separately (manyness) he also

points out that the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity (oneness). The God of Rahner is not only the silent, distant God who is other than the human and the world (an expression of manyness) but also the God who is utterly near (oneness).

According to D. T. Suzuki, it is possibly in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity that the most profound meeting between Zen and Christianity may be found. It is not easy to perceive this correspondence at first glance. It would seem that the only possible meeting point on this issue would be in terms of the Buddhist Trikaya in which both the one and the many are held. The issue of the dialogue at this point is very delicate, for even after one affirms a similarity between the Christian Trinity and the Buddhist Trikaya in terms of oneness and manyness, there are still many issues to be pursued in regard to the Trinity as Father, Son, and Spirit. In Chapter III it was suggested that there is some similarity between God as Father and the Void in Zen. This similarity was derived from a common unthematic, noncategorical understanding of the Father and the Void. However, if one lets the discussion rest here, a duality is present, the duality of unthematic and thematic, categorical and noncategorical. This duality is sidestepped insofar as in Christianity the Father is not simply transcendent but also immanent. In Zen, the Void is not merely undefinable but is also ex-

pressed in the defined.

With regard to Jesus, the Second Person of the Christian Trinity, the question arises whether there is anything in Zen comparable to the incarnation or to a personal center. It was suggested that there is some similarity between the Zen understanding of "suchness" and the incarnation. In Christianity, Jesus is a personal center. The question arises whether or not there is a corresponding reality in Zen. It was suggested that the Zen Master could be considered to be a personal center in Zen in a way similar to Jesus. Both Jesus and the Zen Master mediate immediateness. Jesus reveals the Father. He is a mediator. The Zen Master points to the moon. Jesus is one with the Father. The Zen Master is the moon. The theme of the one and the many is again central. If Jesus and the Zen Master are simply mediators, then there is an emphasis on differentiation or manyness. If the opposite is the only reality, then oneness is affirmed. However, Jesus and the Zen Master, as mediating immediacy, are expressive of both oneness and manyness. The discussion of God as Spirit is built into the discussion of grace. The fundamental issue here is the relationship between the divine and the human. Any discussion of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Grace, is not simply an elaboration of the divine pole of the divine-human dialectic but also an articulation of the human pole and the interrelationship

of the divine and the human. The Christian doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Grace do not merely say something about God. They also speak of the human and especially of the relationship between the divine and the human, between God and creation. Each of these Christian doctrines can be articulated in terms of the theme of the one and the many. The fundamental question here is the question of the unity of God and the human or the diversity of God and the human. In both Zen and Christianity unity and diversity, oneness and manyness, differentiation and nondifferentiation are held in this matter. For Rahner, while speaking of grace in terms of a quasi-formal causality, points out that there is a fundamental unity between God and the human as well as a fundamental differentiation. The same fundamental relationship is expressed by Hisamatsu when he speaks of Zen as "Self-sustaining Independence." From the perspective of the entire Christian trinitarian belief, the above similarities could also be expressed in terms of Rahner's contention that the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity and the Zen "equation" of sunyata and tathata or emptiness is suchness. Granting these similarities, it is then suggested that there is, at bottom, a similarity between the God of Christianity and the Buddha-Nature of Zen.

The effect of such suggestions as made above would also touch on Roman Catholic approaches to original sin,

faith, and salvation. Each of these aspects of Christian belief can be expressed in terms of the one and the many. This expression is most evident insofar as each of these three beliefs can be discussed in terms of freedom. According to Rahner, original sin involves the possibility of a real choice between damnation and salvation. Freedom, for Rahner, is the human capacity to do something final. Faith is involved insofar as the venture of freedom is a trusting venture. Finally, salvation itself is freedom. The issue from the Catholic point of view is whether or not the finality involved in freedom is already present or not yet fulfilled. Another way of putting this question is to ask if salvation is realized only after death or whether it is possible to be "saved" in via. Salvation ultimately is God's self-communication in grace. This self-communication is such that not only is there a oneness with God but also the differentiation between God and the human is preserved. It has been suggested that, in order to hold both oneness and manyness, it cannot be categorically affirmed that salvation is realized only after death nor that it is realized before death. This points to the fundamental freedom of the human, which freedom is salvation, and which salvation itself is the condition for the possibility for salvation or damnation. Zen speaks of the fundamental distress of the human in terms of a duality. For Suzuki, this distress is the fact of duality (manness). Libera-

tion or enlightenment is not so much the overcoming of the duality as it is a realization of both duality and unity, manyness, and oneness. Thus, in terms of freedom, there is a close similarity between Zen and Roman Catholicism. This implies a significant similarity between the "source" of freedom, that is, between the God of Christianity and the Buddha-Nature in Zen.

The question of ethics in Zen and Roman Catholicism is closely connected to the theme of freedom and hence to the theme of the one and the many. Both Zen and Christianity ground their ethics in their fundamental "experiences," that is, faith and enlightenment. For both ethics is not simply a way to salvation or satori, but rather expressions of these "experiences." In both Zen and Christianity, love is central. This love is expressed in nonattachment. The nonattachment is not a dualistic separation but rather a being "no-self" which is the realization of the True Self or the Buddha-Nature. It is the union with God in such a way that the human is also totally human. The love is such that it is both universal and particular. Thus, the questions of ethics are also bound into the theme of the one and the many, unity and diversity.

Thus, in the meeting between Zen and Roman Catholicism the theme of the one and the many is present not only in general but also in the particulars of the meeting. It is such a theme that it might enable Zen and Roman Catholi-

cism to expand the terms of the discussion. It could also bring about a concentration. To expand would emphasize manyness. To concentrate would be to recognize oneness.

The theme of the one and the many is not a static theme in which a definitive resolution can necessarily be found. It is a theme which could provide for an ongoing meeting. Yet, it is not a theme which is simply unstable. Rather the theme of the one and the many is stabilized in the very "experience" or actualization of Zen and Roman Catholicism.

PART II

BEING OR NONBEING

It has been pointed out that both oneness and manyness are constitutive elements of humans and of civilization, that One would not truly be One unless it was expressed in the Many, and that the Many are an inner moment of the One. It was seen that, for Hisamatsu, "Absolute Oneness" is the ground of all reality and that "Absolute Oneness" is described as the "Fundamental Subject that is Absolutely Nothing" which is also the "Fundamental Subject that is Actively Nothing." Another way of saying this is that "true oneness is a oneness in manyness and that true manyness is a manyness in oneness." It was on this basis that a number of possible correspondences between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism were presented.

However, a further analysis of the "ground" of all reality, as realized by Hisamatsu and Suzuki, radically calls these possible correspondences into question.

In an article on "The Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," Hisamatsu points out that "Nothingness" is peculiar to the Orient in contrast with Western culture. He writes:

What I should like to call Oriental Nothingness is, in my opinion, a Nothingness ('Nothing,' 'Non-Being,' or 'Not') peculiar to the Orient. It is, especially in contrast to Western culture, the fundamental moment of 'Oriental' culture. I also consider it to be the core of Buddhism, and, moreover, the essence of Zen.¹

The "Absolute Oneness" which is described above as the "ground" of Zen is understood by Hisamatsu as "Nothingness" or "Non-Being." The following discussion of this core realization of Zen will be the catalyst for a fundamental question to be asked of the Catholics who have encountered Zen and hence of the encounter itself between Roman Catholicism and Zen.

According to Hisamatsu, "Nothingness" or "Non-Being" can be understood in a variety of ways. It is especially while describing the limitations of these understandings (misunderstandings?) of "Nothingness" that he contrasts the Orient with Western culture and also, simultaneously, describes the peculiar Oriental sense of

¹Hisamatsu, "The Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness," p. 65.

"Nothing."

First, "Nothingness" is not simply the negation of a particular being, nor is "Nothingness" the negation of the whole of being. Thus, Oriental Nothingness is not expressed by the negations of the statements: "There is no water," and "There is nothing at all."²

Secondly, Oriental Nothingness is not a mere negative predication, that is, it is not the "not" of the statement, "This is not that," or more particularly, "A door is not a wall," or "A pen is not a building." In this case the door is not negated as such as it would be in the statement, "There is no door." Rather, there is a predication concerning the door that is negative. Thus, Oriental Nothingness is not the negative predication, "This is not that." Furthermore, just as "Nothingness" is not the negation of the whole of being, neither is it a total negation of the subject. For example, it is not the negation of, "The door is not anything whatsoever." This understanding of "Nothingness" as a negative predication is what Hisamatsu understands to be the sense of the statement in Christianity that "God isn't any-thing whatsoever." He argues that this approach to God which sees God as no-thing with all that is, is not Oriental Nothing. Rather, "Oriental Nothingness" is beyond predication. It

²Ibid., p. 67.

is absolutely Nothing.³

Thirdly, "Nothingness" is not "non-being" as an abstract concept, that is, it is not a universal in the same manner that "being" is abstractly a universal. "It is rather," according to Hisamatsu, "Non-Being which goes beyond 'being and non-being.'"⁴ This is significant, especially, in the light of the predominant Western Christian philosophical theological grounding in "being."

Fourthly, "Nothingness" is not a conjectural nothingness, as, for example, in a person's imagining that a friend who is present is really absent. This would be merely a "subjective state of contemplation." Oriental Nothingness is not simple subjectiveness as in the contrast between subject and object. It is not simply a passive contemplative state. Rather, Oriental Nothingness is "The active contemplating Mind" in contrast with simply active contemplation. "It is rather Subject-Nothingness, in which active and passive are one, and in which the duality of mind and object is left behind."⁵ In other words, Oriental Nothingness is the Fundamental Subject that is Absolutely Nothing and the Fundamental Subject that is Actively Nothing.

³Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁴Ibid., p. 70.

⁵Ibid., p. 71.

Finally, Oriental Nothingness is not the unconscious of deep sleep, or fainting, or death. Rather, it is perfectly aware with "an awareness in which subject and object are one. That is, Oriental Nothingness is that awareness of Oneself in which the subject and object of awareness are one and not two."⁶ Thus, the Oriental Nothingness of Hisamatsu is also "Absolutely One," a Oneness which is not a simply unity, but a Oneness which is perfect lucidity, a Oneness which is Nothingness beyond being and nonbeing.

The centrality of "Oriental Nothingness" to Zen is also realized by D. T. Suzuki. However, his approach is not contained explicitly in any one place but must be gleaned from his writings which are grounded in his realization of "Nothingness." According to Suzuki, satori is the core of Zen.⁷ It is here that one easily might be misled, for Suzuki sometimes speaks of the essence of Zen in terms of "being." For example, he writes that "Zen in its essence is the art of seeing into the nature of one's own being."⁸ However, more often than not Suzuki qualifies his statement about the core of Zen. Following is a brief outline of Suzuki's teaching on Oriental Nothingness as the

⁶Ibid., p. 72.

⁷Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p. 21.

⁸Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 3.

foundation of Zen.

Zen is seeing directly into one's original nature.⁹ This Nature is also called the Mind and the Mind is the Buddha. One's original nature is the Buddha-Nature. The Buddha-Nature is absolute emptiness or Sunyata.¹⁰ Suzuki often points out that Emptiness is unattainable. He means by this that Emptiness is beyond perception or grasping, that it is "on the other side of being and non-being."¹¹ But this does not mean that Emptiness is simply beyond our reach. If this were the case we would be involved in a duality. Rather, Emptiness is beyond grasping yet always with us and in us, constantly within our reach.¹² This is what Suzuki means when he says that "to be is not to be, not to be is to be,"¹³ and when he proposes the equation: Zero equals infinity.¹⁴ Thus the central realization of Zen is satori which is a seeing into one's true nature. True nature is the Buddha-Nature which is absolute Emptiness which is beyond "being" and "nonbeing," yet always with us.

Thus, for both Suzuki and for Hisamatsu, Oriental Nothingness is the ground of Zen. The Nothingness is Absolute Oneness, a oneness which is not identified with either

⁹Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 210.

¹¹Ibid., p. 190.

¹²Ibid., pp. 190-91.

¹³Suzuki, What Is Zen?, p. 23.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 33.

"being" or "nonbeing." It is the realization of the Non-being beyond "being" and "nonbeing." It is a Oneness in which One and Many are inner moments of each other.

The question arises now as to how this central realization of Zen as "Oriental Nothingness" affects the conclusions reached in the body of this dissertation, and outlined at the beginning of this chapter, which conclusions are grounded on a suggested correspondence between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism in regard to the theme of the One and the Many.

In Chapter II, it was established that the Catholics who had encountered Zen grounded themselves on the central "experiences" of both Zen and Christianity. It was then suggested that a key to the question of whether or not these grounds were common was the issue of the one and the many. This conclusion is not invalidated by the above discussion of "Oriental Nothingness." According to both Hisamatsu and Suzuki the fundamental ground of Zen¹⁵ is the realization of "Absolute Oneness," which is another

¹⁵A word must be said about the metaphor "ground" as it might be used in Zen. "Ground" is often perceived in Western culture as substantive and related to "Being." However, in Zen, the metaphor "ground" understood in this way, would be misleading for two reasons. First, if the metaphor "ground" is used it must refer to "Nonbeing" which is beyond being and nonbeing. Secondly, the metaphor "ground" is dualistic, that is, it is in opposition to "groundless." In order to use the metaphor "ground" in Zen it must be qualified as a "groundless ground."

way they speak of Nothingness. Hisamatsu explicitly points out that Oriental Nothingness is "the fundamental moment of 'Oriental culture.'" According to Suzuki, satori, which is seeing directly into one's original nature, which nature is the Buddha-Nature, which is absolute Emptiness (Sunyata), is central for Zen.

Thus, the Catholic authors who have encountered Zen are right in their estimation that "enlightenment" is central to Zen. However, their mode of understanding this "ground" must be questioned insofar as they equate the central "experience" of Zen with a "seeing into one's own true being."

According to Johnston, Zen and Catholicism are radically different insofar as Catholicism affirms both the one and the many while Zen affirms Absolute Oneness. The concern at this point is with his understanding of Zen as affirming Absolute Oneness. As pointed out above, Absolute Oneness is central in Zen. However, there is a radical difference between Johnston's understanding of Absolute Oneness and that of Hisamatsu and Suzuki. For Johnston Absolute Oneness is identified with Being. Thus, he says that Buddhists meet in the experience of the ground of the soul where "Being is." The core of Zen is identified with Being. He furthermore states that enlightenment is a pure experience or "isness," and that the void in Zen is merely apparent. This understanding of Zen is distinctly different from that of Suzuki and Hisamatsu for whom the "void" is ultimate

reality, the Nonbeing beyond being and nonbeing. It also differs from the Zen realization that the Absolute Oneness which is "Nonbeing" affirms both Oneness and Manyness.

Enomiya-Lassalle differs from Johnston when he states that the fundamental "experiences" of both Zen and Christianity are experiences of absolute unity. But his understanding of absolute unity differs from that of Hisamatsu and Suzuki. Enomiya-Lassalle recognizes the importance of "nothingness" in Zen. He, however, perceives it as preliminary to a realization of "absolute being" when he argues that ultimately Zen enlightenment is a passage through nothingness to "absolute being." Thus, for Enomiya-Lassalle, "absolute unity" is identified with "absolute being," while for Hisamatsu and Suzuki "absolute oneness" is the "Nonbeing" beyond being and nonbeing, a distinction not made by Enomiya-Lassalle.

The approach of Merton to the fundamental realization of Zen is more subtle than that of Johnston or Enomiya-Lassalle. Unlike them, Merton realizes the significance of the "void" in Zen when he attributes an ultimacy to that "void" by equating it to pure being as Suzuki does when he affirms that "to be is not to be." In the end, however, Merton describes Zen as "Being's awareness of itself in us," a realization that differs from Suzuki's and Hisamatsu's "nondual" realization of "Oriental Nothingness."

Finally, Graham identifies the Zen realization with

a realization of Being. The other authors do not even deal with this issue and hence miss the "core" of Zen. Therefore, as a whole, the Catholic authors who have encountered Zen do not face the fundamental moment of Zen as it is presented to us by Hisamatsu and Suzuki, "Oriental Nothingness." Even if there would be a question of similar understandings of "Being" on the part of the Catholics and "Nonbeing" on the part of the Zen Buddhists, that is, that for them "Being" is beyond being and nonbeing, the Catholics do not pursue this line of reasoning, but, in fact, give expression to the common Catholic philosophical theological tradition with its emphasis on the centrality of Being.¹⁶

How do these divergencies affect the conclusion of Chapter II that there is some correspondence between Zen and Catholicism in regard to the theme of the one and the many and hence some correspondence between the Buddha-Nature and the God of Christianity? From the Zen point of view, as expressed by Suzuki and Hisamatsu, it would mean that this possible correspondence is unfounded insofar as there is a radical difference between themselves and the Catholic authors. This conclusion, however, does not preclude any further investigation of possible correspondences

¹⁶Further discussion of this point will be taken up at a later stage of this chapter.

in regard to this fundamental issue, a question that will be discussed later. We must now proceed to discuss briefly how the centrality of "Non-Being" in Zen affects the themes of the dialogue between Zen and Catholicism that are treated from Chapter III to Chapter VIII.

In Chapter III, it was seen that Merton perceives a triadic structure of existence in Suzuki's presentation of Zen, that is, Being is Seeing is Acting. Implicit in Merton's understanding of this triadic structure of existence is its grounding in Being. A further reading of Suzuki will, however, show that this is inadequate. As pointed out above, Sunyata, or Emptiness or Nonbeing is basic to the Zen of Suzuki. This Nonbeing is such that it is beyond the distinction between being and nonbeing. Thus, Suzuki writes that "to be is not to be, not to be is to be," and "isness is not isness."¹⁷ The same realization is expressed when he writes that purity means nothingness,¹⁸ and that the key to Hui Neng, the father of Chinese Zen, is to be found in the realization that "from the very first not a thing is."¹⁹ Furthermore, the "Seeing" of the equation, "Being is Seeing is Acting" is a "not seeing." This is evident in the discussion in Chapter V of Suzuki's approach

¹⁷Suzuki, What is Zen?, p. 23.

¹⁸Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 161.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 157.

to Ignorance²⁰ which can be summed up in the statements: to see is not to see, not to see is to see; or, to know is not to know, not to know is to know. This is the direct implication of Suzuki's perception that in Zen, "when seeing is no seeing, there is real seeing."²¹ The same correspondence as that between being and nonbeing, seeing and not seeing can be applied to the third element of Suzuki's triadic structure of existence, "Acting." To act is not to act and not to act is to act is the precise meaning of Suzuki's comment that "Dhyana is attained where there is, so to speak, no Dhyana practised."²² Thus, for Suzuki, it is true that Being is Seeing is Acting, but it must also be understood that the Being is a Notbeing and the Seeing is a Notseeing and the Acting is a Notacting. This is simply an expression of the fundamental core of Zen as "Oriental Nothingness" and must be considered if one wishes to try to find any correspondences between Suzuki's triadic structure of Being and the Christian Trinity.

Finally, in regard to Chapter III, there is a discussion of Suzuki's and Hisamatsu's presentation of the Buddhist Trikaya. In the light of the centrality of Oriental Nothingness, Hisamatsu's emphasis must be under-

²⁰See above, pp. 240-44.

²¹Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 163.

²²Ibid., p. 182.

lined.²³ He does not emphasize the triadic aspect of the Trikaya but rather concentrates on the formless basis of the Trikaya. This is additional evidence for Zen's grounding in "Oriental Nothingness." If a correspondence is to be found between the Christian Trinity and the Buddhist Trikaya, one must deal with the grounding of the Trikaya on "Nothingness."

During the discussion of grace and self-reliance in Zen in Chapter IV, it was pointed out that, for Suzuki, will power is basic to Zen. In the course of that discussion, it was argued that, for Suzuki, the will in Zen is sunyata or the Buddha-Nature and that the "self" of self-reliance is the True Self or the Buddha-Nature. It was also seen that, for Suzuki, to will is to be and to become.²⁴ A careful reading of Suzuki at this point will uncover the fact that the will is not simply equated with "being" but rather that the "source" of will is the "Cosmic (or Ontological) Unconscious," which Suzuki then refers to as "Mu."²⁵ In another place, while commenting on the Zen of Hui Neng, Suzuki says that the "concept of the unconscious is the foundation of Zen. Unconscious is then

²³See above, p. 126.

²⁴See above, pp. 160-63.

²⁵Suzuki, Fromm, and DeMartino, Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, p. 51.

identified with "no-consciousness" or "no-thought" or "no-mind" which in the context is identified with the Buddha-Nature or "Oriental Nothingness."²⁶ Thus to speak of self-reliance and grace in the Zen of Suzuki, they must be grounded in Oriental Nothingness.

A similar comment can be made in regard to the "Self-sustaining Independence" of Hisamatsu. In his discussion of reliance, Hisamatsu points out that "true-relying" is "not-relying."²⁷ Further, the "Self" of "Self-sustaining Independence" is precisely the True Self which is true emptiness or "Nothingness."²⁸ Therefore, again, the central moment of Zen, which is "Nothingness" must be seriously considered if one is to find any correspondences between Catholicism and Zen with respect to the reality of grace and self-reliance.

It is evident from all the above discussion that any discussion of "Zen consciousness" from the points of view of Suzuki and Hisamatsu, must have as its "root source" the realization of Oriental Nothingness. In Chapter V, in the discussion of Zen and Christian consciousness, Enomiya-Lassalle describes Zen consciousness as a "vision of essence." In the accepted Catholic tradition, essence is

²⁶Suzuki, Zen Buddhism, p. 163.

²⁷Hisamatsu, "Zen: Its Meaning for Modern Civilization," p. 27.

²⁸Ibid., p. 35.

bound up with being and, as pointed out above, Enomiya-Lassalle identifies the Zen "vision of essence" with the realization of "absolute being," which involves an undifferentiated unity. This understanding of Zen, again, does not take seriously the Zen realization of Nothingness. Furthermore, to relate this to an undifferentiated unity does not give full accord to Hisamatsu's understanding of "Nothingness" in which unity or oneness and manyness are inner moments of each other. The same criticism leveled against Johnston and Merton above, also holds here. Both perceive the fundamental Zen experience as "Being's awareness of itself in us" and hence do not reach the root of Zen in Oriental Nothingness. Finally, the same critique can be made of the Catholics' approach to ethics in Zen. It is recognized that Zen ethics is grounded in the fundamental "experience" of Zen, but it is not directly realized that this ground is Oriental Nothingness.

In conclusion, then, it must be stated that the "ground" of Zen is Oriental Nothingness" which is beyond being and nonbeing and in which true oneness is necessarily a oneness in manyness and that true manyness is a manyness in oneness. The Catholics who have encountered Zen have not directly faced this Zen realization and, moreover, have generally misinterpreted Zen by describing it as grounded in being.

In contrast to their perceptions of the basis of Zen, the Catholic authors who have encountered Zen do give expression to the generally accepted philosophical-theological ground of Christianity. The following pages will be a presentation of how they describe the central Christian experience and a critique of it in the light of Thomistically-grounded philosophical-theology.

William Johnston has pointed out that the highest point of Christian mysticism is not in any I-Thou experience, but rather in the experience that God lives in me. In another place he describes this experience as a process of vertical thinking by which a person realizes God who is the ground of being, an experience in which a person reaches the ground of the soul where "Being is." This experience involves both a unity and a duality. Hence "I" and God are one and yet remain two. The point to be made here is that, for Johnston, God is identified with "Being."

For Enomiya-Lassalle, the central Christian experience is the direct vision of God in a union of love. This "vision" involves a simple and undifferentiated experience of perfect unity. It would seem, at this stage, that, for Enomiya-Lassalle, the ground of Christianity is the experience of "absolute oneness" which, in via, perceives God as personal and different, yet after death overcomes the divine-human duality in the bliss of undifferentiated unity. He does, however, express his own

Christian roots when he tries to equate Zen satori with the vision of God. The "vision" is a "vision of essence" in which ultimate reality is experienced as absolute being, which experience is identified with an experience of God. Thus, for Enomiya-Lassalle, the foundation of Christianity is the experience of unity with God who is all in all, and God is precisely absolute being. Even though, at times, he speaks of the unity with God as an undifferentiated unity, at other times, he qualifies this by saying that the Christian mystic does not, as a human, become God.

Graham consistently maintains a distinction between God and the human, yet he perceives a divine-human "co-naturalness." God, for him, is infinitely good and is such because he lacks nothing of being. Thomas Merton also recognizes that God is identified with being. He speaks of the fundamental Christian experience as "union with God" and then describes this experience as a metaphysical intuition of Being. Thomas Hand describes faith as the experience of transcendent Being and Peter Kreeft perceives the radical transformation of a Christian "new birth" as a transition from nonbeing to being.

Thus, each of the Catholics who are in dialogue with Zen understand the foundation and ground of Christianity to be God and then speak of this ultimate reality as Being. It is evident, again, that they differ from Hisamatsu and Suzuki on this fundamental issue of ultimate

reality and do give expression to the generally accepted Catholic identification of God with absolute Being. The following few pages will be a brief, broad outlining of this Catholic orientation to provide a further contrast between Zen and Catholicism.

Etienne Gilson gives succinct expression to the common Catholic teaching on God when he writes that a Christian's

. . . philosophical first principle had to be one with his religious first principle, and since the name of his God was 'I am' any Christian philosopher had to posit 'I am' as his first principle and supreme cause of all things, even in philosophy.²⁹

Over the centuries there have been varieties of understandings of God as Being. Very few Christian theologians or philosophers have not adopted Being as their first principle. To Augustine being was eternal immutability, to John Damascene it was an infinite ocean of entity, to Anselm it was that whose very nature is to be.³⁰ Finally, to Thomas Aquinas and his followers, who are our main interest, God is insofar as He is existence, that is, the "being" ascribed to God, is the verb "to be." This should not be confused with the "being" of "to become." Rather

²⁹Etienne Gilson, God and Philosophy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 41.

³⁰Etienne Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 368.

God is absolutely simple and perfect, that is, altogether without composition, but the First Being which is absolutely prior and independent and perfect insofar as He possesses, or better, is Being in its fullness, without defect, lack, or limitation. Thus, God is Pure Being which is Pure Act and hence also True, Good, and One.

This conception of ultimate reality as Full Being which is True and Good and One is directly opposed to the Zen approach to ultimate reality as "Nonbeing." This is especially evident in the Thomistic understanding of evil. Evil is not positive being. It is a lack, an absence of being or form, a negation of good and of being, in fact, "non-being." However, evil is not mere negation but rather privation, the lack in something of that which ought to be present in such a way that the existence of evil is impossible without its grounding in the good or in being. Thus, sheer nothingness is an impossibility since it is grounded in being.

A major question now arises as to the relation between Being and beings, between God and the world. Being, as such, is not a genus since genus is always divided into species and Being would then be a composite. Rather Being is a transcendental, that is, it is not one kind of anything but rather it is everything. What then is the connection between Being and beings? It is here that the classic teaching on the "analogy of being" enters the

discussion. God is being and creatures are being. But being is not attributed to both in an univocal manner. The reason for this is explicitly related to the meeting between Catholics and Zen. For, to attribute being to God and to creatures in an univocal manner would be to identify being with nonbeing or nothing. Why is this so? To say that God who is uncaused, self-existent being is being in the same way as creatures who are caused being would mean that being would be divided into subgenera and related to them as potency is to two alternate acts. This would mean that potency is the source of the actual, that indeterminate-ness is the primal source of determinate being. "Nothing" would then be the matrix of being.

However, there is an approach to being which embraces the being of God and the being of creatures, that is, the analogy of being. The actuality of both God and creatures is "to be." However, the relationship between God and "to be" and creatures and "to be," is different. For God, "to be" is to be of Himself (a se), and for creatures, "to be" is to be caused (ab alio). A last brief comment in this context is that the analogy of being allows us to say something, albeit limited, about God in a positive manner. Thus, we have here the roots of the via affirmativa in which God is not less than creatures but more than creatures. If a human is wise, God is wise in the fullest sense possible by analogy.

Another important consideration to be made here is that of the one and the many. It will again become evident how this Catholic tradition under discussion is radically different from the Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu. Within the common Thomistic tradition unity or oneness is a transcendental attribute of being. The unity here is not the unity that is the principle of number. It is rather the negation of division or the undividedness of being. Oneness is identical with being in re but differs from being in conception (in ratione). Thus, being and oneness stand or fall together. To preserve the unity of anything is to preserve its being. One is convertible with being. If this is so then it would seem that multiplicity or manyness would be excluded from being, that is, that multiplicity would be nonbeing. However, Thomistic theologians and philosophers accept the evident reality of multiplicity and ground it in oneness. Manyness is being insofar as it is in some way one. Thus, the reality of oneness and manyness is affirmed and manyness is real insofar as it participates in oneness and hence in being.

There may be a temptation to perceive oneness as the fundamental reality. However, Thomism, while it affirms the convertibility of oneness and being and hence may be considered a philosophy of the one, affirms oneness only insofar as it affirms being as fundamental. Thus, the proper name of God is "I am" and not "The One." While it is

true that God is supremely One, God is such because He is supremely Being. This is important for the question of the One and the Many. It would seem that manyness is defined in terms of the one and vice-versa. There is no vicious circle here because the starting point is neither the one nor the many, but "Being."

The Catholics in dialogue with Zen, at least indirectly, affirm the grounding of oneness and manyness in being and hence affirm the reality of both oneness and manyness. Johnston emphasizes that the "enlightenment" of Christian mystics is an experience of utter unity which contains, as it were, within itself, an element of diversity. Further, he recognizes that God is both all in all and that there is a distinction between God and creatures. Since, for Johnston, God is being as such, then the oneness and diversity are grounded in being. As other Catholics who have met Zen, he does not pursue this question any further nor does he develop it philosophically.

Enomiya-Lassalle presents an ambivalent stance in regard to the issue of the one and the many. As pointed out above, he finally affirms that the experience of God is an experience of the "to be." However, in his description of the definitive union with God, he describes this as an undifferentiated unity. It would seem that he, then, denies the reality of manyness in the realization of

undifferentiated unity. In fact, Enomiya-Lassalle does affirm the distinction between God and creatures in via and then affirms the realization of God in an experience of the unity of all in one in absolute being after death. He thus affirms Being as fundamental to oneness and does not consistently deal with oneness and manyness.

Merton is much clearer than Enomiya-Lassalle. He perceives the experience of God as an "I-Thou" experience but also wonders how this experience might transcend the subject-object duality. Merton tries to overcome this problem by affirming that there is truly a separation between creator and creature which does not alter the fact of a basic unity. This unity is realized in God who is the summit of our being. Realizing God as the summit of being, we then also are one with God. Thus, Merton again affirms being as fundamental and oneness and manyness as grounded in the experience of God who is being.

The final point that is to be discussed here is the foundation of ethics as it is viewed in Thomistic philosophical theology. Fundamental to ethical theory is the notion of the "good." The ultimate object of ethics is to establish principles of human action that direct human conduct so that humans may attain the good. In this system goodness means desirability. What is ultimately desirable is the perfection of that which is desiring. Perfection is such insofar as it is actual and being is what makes any-

thing actual. Thus, being is at the root of ethics. Human actions affirm being. Thus, as with being and unity, being and goodness are convertible. As unity is the undividedness of being, so goodness is the desirability of being. It might seem that an act like suicide is expressive of the desire for nonbeing. However, in such a case, nonbeing is not desired in itself but rather as relative to being. Suicide is an attempt to overcome an evil (a privation of being) which is too much for a human to bear. The person feels that the escape from this evil is brought about by nonbeing. However, what the person really desires is the removal of the evil which is, in the end, the overcoming of the privation of being or nonbeing. Theologically, the realization of the perfection of goodness is a realization of being which is the attainment of communion with God who is the Supreme Good. This desirability for being which goodness is has led Catholics to develop an intricate moral system of personal and social morality which has as its goal the attainment of the Supreme Good which is God.

The Catholics in dialogue with Zen emphasize detachment or better, nonattachment, as central to both Zen and Catholicism. This detachment is then equated with love. In Thomistic terms this means that the way to attain the Supreme Good is through detachment from that which is not good or detachment from evil (nonbeing or the privation of

being). The way is to grow in love which growth is realized in the love of God. Love of God implies unity with God who is the Supreme Good. Thus, fullness of life involves the goodness and oneness that are convertible with being. Hence, the goal of Christian morality is "fullness of being." While the Catholic authors in dialogue with Zen do not develop this systematic approach, it is implicit in their thought insofar as they perceive that the realization of ultimate reality is the realization of God who is Being.

Thus, to conclude this section, it is evident not only that the Catholics who have encountered Zen have not met Zen at its root, that is, Oriental Nothingness, but also do give expression to the common Catholic Thomistic emphasis on Being as ultimate reality. Furthermore, it would seem that no meeting point can be found in Catholicism and Zen in regard to their fundamental grounds, and that, in fact, Zen would be relegated by Catholicism to the realm of evil insofar as Zen affirms Nonbeing as ultimate reality and Nonbeing, for Catholicism is simply the privation of being which it would be necessary to overcome if one is to attain to the highest good which is God, Supreme Being. In the light of this tentative conclusion Johnston's affirmation that the outcome of the Zen-Catholic meetings in Japan is a unity of heart and not a unity of mind would be presumptuous. Unity of heart includes unity

of mind. The heart of Christianity, as described above, is Being. The heart of Zen is Nonbeing which transcends being and nonbeing. A seemingly unbridgeable abyss separates these two traditions.

The point of view of this dissertation on the encounter between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism is Catholic. We have seen in the body of the dissertation that a significant correspondence between God in Christianity and the Buddha-Nature in Zen could be found in the light of the theology of Rahner in terms of the theme of the one and the many. In the previous portion of this chapter we saw that Zen and Catholicism are at an impasse. The question arises now as to whether or not this impasse is permanent. The following broad, brief reflections suggest that, from a Catholic point of view, the impasse is not permanent. The question is: can the theme of the one and the many be grounded in a perception of reality which does not exclude Zen? It is true that this is a negative question. However, it is also such that it could be the means of expressing the possibility of inclusiveness in the Catholic tradition rather than exclusion of the Zen realization of ultimate reality as Oriental Nothingness. It is not implied here that Catholicism is superior to Zen, but the possibility is simply affirmed that Catholicism is not antagonistic to Zen and that, in fact, there are fundamental approaches within the Catholic tradition that could

provide a springboard for a substantive meeting.

There are two methods of approach to the issue at hand: one approach is to search through the Catholic traditions to find persons whose Catholicism is not as opposed to Zen as the above Thomistic philosophical theology; a second approach is to look into Christian belief in God to discover if it is necessarily bound by specific categories of reality such as being and/or nonbeing. Implicit in both of these approaches is the assumption that Catholicism is not permanently wedded to the Thomistic system. In the following pages there is a brief presentation of both approaches. The former approach looks to the past, the latter has its eye on the future.

It would seem to be self-evident to Christian philosophers familiar with Hisamatsu and Suzuki that the first place to look for possible correspondences to Oriental Nothingness would be in the writings of those Christian theologians who cast their theology in the light of the philosophy of Plotinus. Ultimate Reality, for Plotinus, is not being. Rather, unity is the very root or cause of being. In other words, for Plotinus, being is not the first principle. The philosophy of Plotinus is a philosophy of absolute oneness where the One is not an object precisely because it transcends being. According to Gilson, the ultimate implication of this position is that "being

itself flows from a transcendent nonbeing."³¹ Plotinus himself makes this "clear" when he writes of Oneness that:

It is because nothing in it is, that everything comes from it; so much so that, in order that being be, the One itself is bound not to be being, but the father of being, and being is its first born child.³²

Plotinus has had significant influence on some major Christian theologians, either directly or indirectly. The first person to come to mind is Augustine of Hippo who was an ardent follower of Plotinus. Augustine, however, did not follow Plotinus to the logical conclusion of his system, but parted company with him at a crucial juncture. For Augustine God is all in all and since God is being, then there is nothing beyond being. There have been a few theologians, however, who did articulate their theology in accord with Plotinus. A few of these thinkers will be presented briefly. They are Pseudo-Dionysius, John Scotus Erigena, and Meister Eckhart. Of these three, Pseudo-Dionysius has had the most influence on Christian theology. One reason for this influence is his mistaken identity. This, however, does not lessen the power of his system.

Pseudo-Dionysius, a Christian theologian commonly dated today as having lived and written sometime during

³¹Etienne Gilson, The Elements of a Christian Philosophy (New York: Mentor-Omega, 1960), p. 106.

³²Plotinus, Enn., V, 3, 15. Quoted by Etienne Gilson, Being and Some Philosophers (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949), p. 22.

the sixth century A.D., used two ways of approaching God, a positive way and a negative way. The positive way, used in his book, The Divine Names, ascribes to God creaturely perfections. These perfections are not predicated of God in the same manner that they exist in creatures but are seen to exist in God without imperfection. In his work on Mystical Theology he expresses his preference for the negative way. This affirmation is expressed by Pseudo-Dionysius at the end of his treatise, The Divine Names, where he writes:

Therefore they (theologians) have chosen the negative way, since by this the soul is lifted above things akin to itself and travels through all the conceptions of God which are transcended by that which is above all names and all reason and knowledge, and at the summit of the whole is united to Him in the measure of its power of union with Him.³³

Pseudo-Dionysius, then, goes beyond the negative way and the affirmative way insofar as God has no name, positive or negative. It is here that we begin to touch on the roots of the Pseudo-Dionysian "system." He would rather call God "One" than call God "Being." However, even the name "One" is inadequate. God is nameless. To know God is to enter into a superessential darkness. Pseudo-Dionysius writes:

³³Dionysius the Areopagite, The Divine Names, trans. Editors of The Shrine of Wisdom (Surrey: The Shrine of Wisdom, 1957), p. 90.

Into this Dark beyond all light, we pray to come and, unseeing and unknowing, to see and to know Him that is beyond seeing and beyond knowing precisely by not seeing, by not knowing. For that is truly to see and to know and to hymn transcendently Him that transcends all.³⁴

This passage is strikingly reminiscent of those statements by Suzuki, to see is not to see, not to see is to see. We have entered the realm of mystical ignorance which is the supreme knowledge.

The God of Pseudo-Dionysius is not being since He is absolutely unconditioned and the cause of being. God must not be what He gives in order that He might give it. This God (who is not being) is the cause of all beings, precisely because "He who is" is not. However, one would miss the point of Pseudo-Dionysius if it were understood that God is "nonbeing" in opposition to "being." The "nonbeing" of God is such that it is beyond "being" and "nonbeing." In his Mystical Theology he advises Timothy to abandon all being and all nonbeing.³⁵ Thus, Pseudo-Dionysius, following in the footsteps of Plotinus, affirms the absolute Oneness of Ultimate Reality to be a Oneness beyond being, a Oneness which is supreme nonbeing, a Oneness beyond being and nonbeing, a Oneness which itself is an inadequate description of the ultimate which is "known"

³⁴Pseudo-Dionysius, The Mystical Theology, quoted by Elmer O'Brien, S.J., Varieties of Mystic Experience (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 83.

³⁵Ibid., p. 79.

in the Darkness beyond all light and darkness.

John Scotus Erigena (810-866 A.D.), an Irish philosopher-theologian and follower of Pseudo-Dionysius, in accord with his master, affirms that the first principle of all is beyond the distinction between "being" and "non-being." At the beginning of De Divisione Naturae, he identifies "Nature" with "Reality" and then describes "Nature" as the totality of all that is and all that is not. He avoids pantheism by distinguishing creator and creatures, yet ultimately perceives God as the origin and term of all, including "being" and "nonbeing." While it is true that Erigena does not reduce God simply to "nothing" nor identify God and creatures (nonbeing and being), his theological philosophy must be distinguished from that of the Thomists insofar as, for him, God is not identified with being but is beyond being and nonbeing. When he does speak of God as nihilum, he means by this the ineffability or incomprehensibility of God, a God who is unable to be bound by any categories.³⁶

Meister Eckhart (1260-1328 A.D.), the fourteenth

³⁶The works of John Scotus Erigena were condemned by the Church as pantheistic. Two noteworthy contemporary Thomistic philosophers, however, contend that Erigena was not a pantheist. Gilson argues this point very strongly. Copleston argues that Erigena is at least orthodox in intention. Cf. Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, pp. 115, 120-22; Gilson, Being and Some Philosophers, pp. 35-36; Frederick Copleston, S.J., A History of Philosophy, V, 2 (Maryland: The Newman Press, 1950), pp. 114, 131-35.

century mystic, scholar, and preacher, seems to present us with two strands of thinking: on the one hand, God is; existence is God's essence. This is similar to the common Thomistic teaching. On the other hand, in contrast, God is above being insofar as He is the cause of being.

A cursory reading of Eckhart could leave the reader with the impression that the God of Eckhart is Being. He writes that:

. . . God is like nothing so much as Being; to the extent anything has Being it is like God
. . . Being is so high and pure that God cannot be more than Being. God sees nothing else, knows nothing else, for Being is his arena.³⁷

Eckhart, however, makes a distinction between God and the Godhead which he claims are as different from each other as heaven and earth. At one point he prays to be rid of God.

What is meant here must be carefully shown. We will let Eckhart speak for himself:

. . . creatures speak of God--but why do they not mention the Godhead? Because there is only unity in the Godhead and there is nothing to talk about. God acts. The Godhead does not. It has nothing to do and there is nothing going on in it. It never is on the lookout for something to do. The difference between God and the Godhead is the difference between action and nonaction.

. . . When I return to the core, the soil, the river, the source which is the Godhead, no one will ask me whence I came or whence I have been. No one will have missed me--for even God passes away.³⁸

³⁷Raymond B. Blakney, trans., Meister Eckhart: A Modern Translation (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1941), p. 171.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 226.

Thus, Eckhart, along with Pseudo-Dionysius and John Scotus Erigena posits ultimate reality beyond being in an absolute "nonbeing"- Godhead, Nature--which is beyond being and nonbeing. These thinkers differ from one another, but the point is that they do not identify ultimate reality and being. All three men argue that since "God" is the cause of being, and that nothing of the effect should be formally in the cause, that being cannot formally be in God.

Finally, brief mention must be made of the contemporary Catholic theologian-philosopher-scientist, Raimundo Panikkar who is devoting his life to the encounter between Christianity and the Oriental religions. In his book on the Christian Trinity, giving expression to his own particular vision, he seems to identify God as Father with "Nonbeing." He says:

Using other terms, we may say: the Absolute, the Father, is not. He has no ex-sistence, not even that of Being. In the generation of the Son he has, so to speak, given everything. In the Father the apophatism (the kenosis or emptying) of Being is real and total . . . Is it not here, truly speaking, in this essential apophatism of the 'person' of the Father, in this kenosis of Being at its very source, that the Buddhist experience of Nirvana and sunyata (emptiness) should be situated. One is led onwards towards the 'absolute goal' and at the end one finds nothing, because there is nothing, not even Being. 'God created out of nothing' (ex nihilo), certainly, i.e., out of Himself (a Deo)--a Buddhist will say.³⁹

³⁹Raimundo Panikkar, The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man (New York: Orbis, 1973), pp., 46-47.

Nothing could be more direct in regard to the possibility of "nonbeing" within Catholic theology.

It has been the object of the foregoing descriptions and references to simply point out that there have been and now are some Catholics for whom "being" is not fundamental to reality, nor is being the only preferred name of God. In fact, more and more Catholic philosophers are taking positions that call into question the identification of God with Being.⁴⁰

Further evidence of the fact that Catholicism is not bound by Thomistic categories in regard to God is to be found in the philosophical theology of Karl Rahner. The following is a summary of points made in Chapters III⁴¹ and VIII⁴² which undoubtedly conclude that the fundamental Christian experience of God is not bound by any categories. According to Rahner, God is ineffable and nameless, indefinable and unattainable, aloof and absent--the absolute and holy mystery. "God is the silent mystery, absolute, unconditioned and incomprehensible." This ineffable God of Christianity is not simply aloof. According to Rahner,

⁴⁰For example, see Leslie Dewart, The Future of Belief (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), pp. 173ff. where he explicitly states that "the Christian theism of the future might not conceive God as a being," and that "the Christian must believe that God is uncreated . . . (and) therefore not be conceived as being."

⁴¹See above, pp. 131ff.

⁴²See above, pp. 315ff.

the God of Christianity is not only distant but also near. God has revealed, that is, has communicated himself. These two fundamentally different approaches to God--as distant and near--are joined by Rahner in the message of Christmas which proclaims that "God's remoteness is the incomprehensibility of his all-pervading nearness." The revelation is precisely the self-communication of God who is incomprehensible, unthematic, and nonconceptual. We may speak of this mystery but our concepts or categories will never catch or discover the secret of the mystery.

Thus, the God of Christianity is not able to be bound by any categories, even the categories of being or nonbeing. It is by reason of this that Christianity, at its root, can never be fully categorized or identified with any system of thought, yet is open to the possibility of expressing itself through any system so long as that system, at least, expresses the incomprehensible nearness of God. This position is not contrary to the classic Thomistic theology as outlined above. Even though the primary way to know God is the way of analogy, these writers, having known the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, affirm that the divinity exceeds every form and concept. In the end each concept of God is inadequate. This would include that favorite fundamental name of God for the Thomists--"I am who am."

In the past few pages we have seen that the Thomis-

tic approach to God as "being" is not necessarily the only way to speak of God within Catholicism. The direct implication, for our purposes, is that Catholicism is not simply unable to truly appreciate the Oriental Nothingness of Zen. To experience God as ultimate reality which relativizes all conceptual structures implies an openness to the approach to ultimate reality as realized in Zen. Hence, the fundamental differences between the Zen of Hisamatsu and Suzuki and Thomistic philosophical theology, while real, do not provide a permanent barrier to the encounter between Roman Catholicism and Zen Buddhism. The differences are, at present, evident. However, this does not mean, from the point of view of Catholicism, that they are permanent. In the process of an encounter persons can meet each other and in the meeting they may be effected if the meeting be true to the fundamental principles of dialogue.

A focal point of this dissertation has been the theme of the one and the many. The development of this theme has given rise to the possibility of a fundamental meeting between Zen and Catholicism in regard to ultimate reality. This meeting ground was then questioned in the light of the centrality of Oriental Nothingness as beyond being and nonbeing in the Zen of Suzuki and Hisamatsu and the fundamental Thomistic Catholic identification of God with Being. This basic difference is not a permanent difference on the part of Catholicism but, in the light of

Rahner's theology of God as Holy Mystery and the evidence within the Catholic traditions of a line of thought which perceived God to be beyond being and nonbeing, the door is open to further discussion, and even possible resonance with and creative modification by touching Zen at its root which is Oriental Nothingness.

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